

**MANAGING FRANCE'S REGIONAL LANGUAGES:
LANGUAGE POLICY IN BILINGUAL PRIMARY EDUCATION
IN ALSACE**

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Abstract

The introduction of regional language bilingual education in France dates back to the late 1960s in the private education system and to the 1980s in the public system. Before this time the extensive use of regional languages was forbidden in French schools, which served as ‘local centres for the gallicisation of France’ (Blackwood 2008, 28). France began to pursue a French-only language policy from the time of the 1789 Revolution, with Jacobin ideology proposing that to be French, one must speak French. Thus began the shaping of France into a nation-state. As the result of the official language policy that imposed French in all public domains, as well as extra-linguistic factors such as the Industrial Revolution and the two World Wars, a significant language shift occurred in France during the twentieth century, as an increasing number of parents chose not to pass on their regional language to the next generation. In light of the decline in intergenerational transmission of the regional languages, Judge (2007, 233) concludes that ‘in the short term, everything depends on education in the [regional languages]’.

This thesis analyses the development of language policy in bilingual education programmes in Alsace; Spolsky’s tripartite language policy model (2004), which focuses on language management, language practices and language beliefs, will be employed. In spite of the efforts of the State to impose the French language, in Alsace the traditionally non-standard spoken regional language variety, Alsatian, continued to be used widely until the mid-twentieth century. Whilst Alsatian has been spoken, the traditional language of writing and reference has been standard German. Today Alsace is a region of north eastern France, but it has existed under the political control of Germany for prolonged periods of time in the past, changing hands between the two countries five times between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries. Since the mid-twentieth century a significant language shift away from Alsatian has occurred in the region, with estimates that over 90% spoke the language variety in 1946 in comparison with only 43% of the population in 2012 (OLCA 2012a). Regional language bilingual education programmes were introduced in Alsace in the early 1990s in the private and public education systems. In both systems the language-in-education policy supported has primarily promoted the learning of and through French and standard German. The case study that forms the central part of the thesis seeks to examine current language policy in practice. It will analyse the place of Alsatian in the modern regional language bilingual classroom and examine the language beliefs of the key actors in the bilingual education programmes (namely parents, teachers and policy-makers at regional level). Finally, it will discuss what this means for efforts to reverse the language shift in twenty-first-century Alsace.

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I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my dad, David Harrison. Although he has not been able to share in my university experience, his overwhelming pride in my early school achievements has encouraged me throughout my studies.

All of the translations contained within this thesis are my own unless it is stated otherwise.

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Chapter 1: Research Context and Outline of Thesis Structure

1.1 Introduction

The principal aim of this introductory chapter is to explain the research context of the thesis and to outline its structure. This chapter will also highlight the key research questions that will guide the development of the thesis. As an introduction, it underlines the main focus of the thesis and also positions the work in relation to other research on current language policy concerning regional languages in France and in Alsace.

1.2 Research Context and Existing Literature

The subject of regional language bilingual education in Alsace has been examined by a number of researchers since the first bilingual education programmes were introduced in the private and public school systems in the early 1990s (see, for example, Bister-Broosen and Willemyns 1998, Sorg 1999, Hélot 2003, Huck 2006). This body of literature is in addition to works on regional language policy in Alsace and the complex historical sociolinguistic situation in the region (see, for example, Phillips 1975, 1978, 1982, Huck *et al* 1999, Bothorel-Witz and Huck 2003, Huck *et al* 2007). Gardner-Chloros (1991) presents a case study in which she examines language contact in and around Strasbourg and includes surveys and observations in mainstream primary schools to analyse language practices and attitudes. This thesis aims to complement existing research and to move on the field of research by providing an insight into the situation on the ground in bilingual classrooms at the present time, and to examine the beliefs and motivations of the key actors involved in regional bilingual education today.

This thesis builds on the previous work on language policy in bilingual education programmes in Alsace by looking at current language policy in practice

and by taking an ethnographic approach to research. The original research carried out in Alsace in the 2009–10 school year, which is contained in the case study that forms the central part of the thesis, sets the study apart from previous work on bilingual education in the region. The thesis thus seeks to make an important contribution to the field of regional and minority language sociolinguistics in the contexts of France and Alsace. It is the aim of this thesis to examine contemporary language policy by employing a multi-strand approach, following Spolsky's tripartite language policy model (2004), which centres on language management, language practices and language beliefs. The case study cannot claim to be representative of *de facto* policy in all primary bilingual education classes in Alsace, but it will reflect trends that extend beyond the relatively small number of schools studied here. The thesis will join other recent studies on current language policy and language-in-education policy towards the regional languages of France (see for example Blackwood [2008] on Corsican, and Nolan [2010] on Gallo).

1.3 Research Questions

There are a number of research questions that shape the overall development of this thesis. The questions link to the three elements of the language policy model followed, namely language management, practices and beliefs. The main research questions that will be addressed are as follows:

What is the current language-in-education policy in practice in primary bilingual education programmes in Alsace?

What are the language beliefs of the key actors (i.e. the parents, teachers and policy-makers at regional level) in the bilingual education programmes?

To what extent are the bilingual education programmes currently acting to reverse the language shift that has taken place in Alsace?

These questions have guided this research project and they will be answered in the chapter six concluding remarks and discussion.

1.4 Thesis Structure

The thesis comprises six chapters, including this introductory chapter (chapter one). Chapter two introduces the field of language policy, which has emerged as a key topic in the study of sociolinguistics in recent years. It outlines Spolsky's language policy model (2004) and introduces the key terms related to sociolinguistics and language policy that will be employed throughout the thesis. Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (1991) will also be presented here as it will be used as a theoretical framework in the thesis to evaluate the position of the different language varieties, and to assess the impact of efforts to reverse language shift. Furthermore, chapter two examines the development of language policy in France, looking in particular at the period that started with the introduction of the first piece of legislation to impose the use of French in the sixteenth century, up to the present day. This will include a discussion of the creation of the nation-state in France, which has had a pivotal and enduring effect on France's language policy. This will provide a useful contextualisation for the analysis of the development of language policy and language-in-education policy in Alsace.

Chapter three presents an overview of the sociolinguistic background of the region of Alsace.¹ The chapter covers the period of history from the arrival of Germanic tribes in the region in the fourth century up to the present time. Although the main focus of the thesis is contemporary language policy, it is important to consider the development of language management, practices and beliefs in the

¹ Sections of chapter 3 have been published as a journal article prior to the completion of this thesis. See Harrison (2012): 'A Century of Changing Language Beliefs in Alsace', *Modern and Contemporary France*, 20, 3, 357–374

region towards the regional language and French. It will be equally important to examine the 1871 unification of Germany and its emergence as a nation-state as this also has had an impact on language policy in Alsace. The chapter includes a discussion of the particular status of the regional language in Alsace, which is recognised as existing in two forms, namely Alsatian and standard German; this will assist the analysis of the development of language-in-education policy in the region.

The first part of chapter four introduces the subject of bilingual education and it examines a number of key models that are followed worldwide. It will look at different forms of language how education systems deal with language. The aims of the numerous bilingual education models, which reflect the language ideologies of policy-makers towards different language varieties, will be discussed. The role of teachers as policy-makers at classroom level will be explored, which will be analysed further in the chapter five case study. This chapter goes on discusses the development of bilingual education programmes in France, involving regional and other languages. This will explain the background to the introduction of the education programmes and it will outline the possibilities and limits for the employment of the regional language. The final part of the chapter focuses on the development of regional language bilingual education programmes in Alsace up to the end of secondary schooling. Although the case study centres on primary education, this will frame the study by explaining the official language-in-education policy of the classes that the pupils will attend after they leave their *école élémentaire*, if they continue in a bilingual education programme.

Chapter five contains the case study which forms the central part of this thesis. It analyses current language management, practices and beliefs in Alsace bilingual primary education, working from research carried out in the region in the

2009–10 school year, which includes classroom observations, interviews and questionnaires. It involves the key actors who influence language policy, namely policy-makers at regional level, teachers and parents.

Lastly, chapter six contains the thesis conclusions and a discussion of the principal research questions that have been set out here.

1.5 Conclusion

This thesis appears at a time when the regional language in Alsace is at another critical point in its history. During the twentieth century a significant language shift away from the regional languages occurred across France as the French language became the language employed in all domains of daily life. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, in spite of the decline in their transmission, in a number of ways the regional languages find themselves in a strong position in society in comparison with the non-territorial languages spoken in France. They have been brought into the arena of public debate since the 1990s with the introduction of the Council of Europe's European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The new political environment, in which regional and minority language speakers can request support for their languages at the regional, national and supranational levels in Europe, presents a situation in which groups can assert their linguistic human rights in a way that has not been possible in the past. Since 2008 the regional languages of France have been recognised (although not enumerated) in the French Constitution; moreover, they can be employed in the domain of education on an equal basis with French, which would have been unthinkable in France until recent decades. The examination of language policy in primary bilingual education in Alsace in this thesis will furthermore provide a useful indication of the current aims and

motivations behind the programmes and outline the ways in which the regional language is being promoted, and could be promoted further.

Chapter 2: Language Policy

2.1 Introduction to Language Policy

The first section of this chapter will introduce the field of language policy, before looking at the particular case of language policy in France in the second part. This will act as a useful contextualisation before analysing language policy in Alsace and French and Alsatian language-in-education policies in subsequent chapters. Although it does not fall into the category of language policy directly, an examination of Fishman's *Reversing Language Shift* (1991) will also be presented here. *Reversing Language Shift* and the author's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale have assumed important positions in modern sociolinguistic study, and they will provide a key theoretical framework in this thesis.

The study of language policy emerged as a key topic within sociolinguistics in the 1960s, and today it remains a subject of interest to a growing number of students and researchers. Prior to this, language policy had been implicit in the processes of nation building, which will be examined in the context of France in the second part of this chapter and in the context of Germany in chapter 3. In a narrow sense, the term 'language policy' has been often understood to refer to language planning or language management, i.e. the policy that an individual or a group exerts regarding the language of others. Ager (2001) views language policy as a top-down action that is exacted by individuals, or groups, in a position of power. He states that '[l]anguage policy is official planning, carried out by those in political authority, and has clear similarities with any form of public policy' (2001, 5). Grin (2003, 27) first employs the terms 'language policy' and 'language planning' interchangeably, before he explains that language policy generally refers to interventions made regarding the position of a language in relation to other languages, whereas language

planning represents grammatical interventions (2003, 28). However, within the discipline of sociolinguistic research, in recent years language policy has been developed to encompass a broader range of language-related issues. In his landmark text on the subject, Spolsky (2004) proposes a tripartite language policy model, the components of which are language practices, language ideologies and language management. Shohamy (2006, 53) summarises Spolsky's language policy paradigm in the following way (Figure 1):

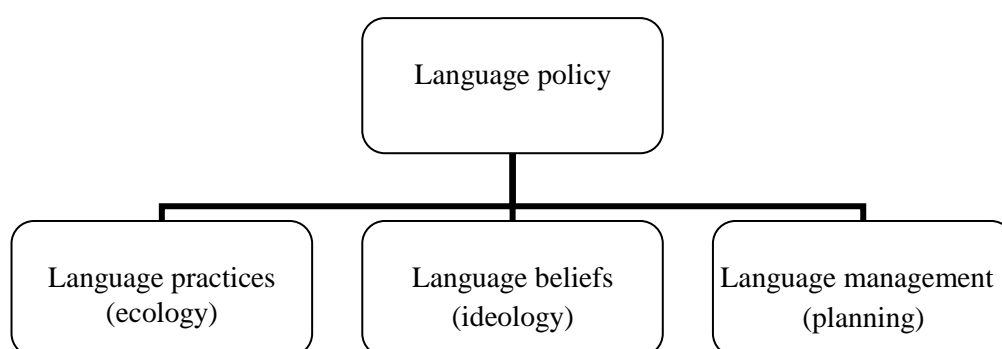


Figure 1: A model of language policy, adapted from Spolsky (2004)
Source: Shohamy (2006, 53)

Contrary to the views of Ager and Grin explained above, this approach to language policy encompasses the multiple stages in the process of policy-making. Within each of the three strands, there are a number of other issues involved, which continue to be examined by researchers. The strands can be viewed as being separate and yet interrelated, as a modification in one of the strands may be affected by or in turn influence a change in another. Spolsky's definition of language policy is believed to be the most suitable to follow in this thesis, as it will provide a clear basis to analyse language practices, beliefs and management in regional language-teaching in France, at the macro level, and Alsace, at the micro level.

Although language policy has been developed only relatively recently as an academic field, many of the issues which are discussed in a contemporary context have existed for as long as language itself. Spolsky (2004, 3–4) draws parallels with language management and the stories of Adam naming the animals in the Garden of Eden and of God’s implementation of individual plurilingualism and societal multilingualism at the Tower of Babel in the book of Genesis in the Old Testament. Shohamy also emphasises the timeless nature of language policy, although particular circumstances necessarily change: ‘While language is dynamic, personal, free and energetic, with no defined boundaries, there have always been those groups and individuals who want to control and manipulate it in order to promote political, social, economic and personal ideologies’ (2006, xv). Therefore, Shohamy suggests that in a top-down situation, language management is implemented in an attempt to influence language beliefs and language practices to achieve certain goals.

2.1.1 Language Management

It is noteworthy that the term ‘language management’ rather than ‘language planning’ is being used here, although Shohamy employs both in her representation of Spolsky’s language policy model (Figure 1). Nekvapil (2006) notes that there has been a terminological shift in sociolinguistics to prefer ‘language management’, in particular since the publication of Spolsky’s *Language Policy* (2004). Nekvapil (2006, 92) explains that the term ‘language planning’ has come to be associated with the nation-building efforts made in the 1960s and 1970s following the decolonisation process. Furthermore, he comments that this language planning was a state-led, and thus top-down, activity carried out by specially appointed panels of experts. Spolsky (2004, 8) describes language management as an act of intervention by any individual

or group in order to manipulate a language situation. This can be carried out at any level of society, from politically empowered legislation-makers at the macro level (top-down action), to the case of a mother insisting that her child use a particular lexical item at the micro level (bottom-up action). Shohamy (2006) expands on Spolsky's model of language policy and suggests that a number of language policy mechanisms, or devices, are employed to turn ideologies into practice (Figure 2).

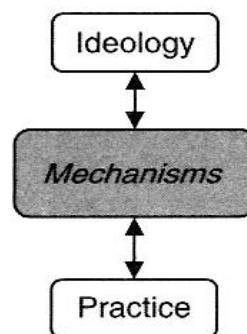


Figure 2: Ideology–mechanism–practice
Source: Shohamy (2006, 54)

It is significant that the arrows flow both ways in the diagram that Shohamy presents here, suggesting that practices can influence the mechanisms, which one could label as language management, and the mechanisms can influence the ideologies. She names five mechanisms that are generally used in an effort to transform language ideologies into *de facto* language policy (Figure 3).

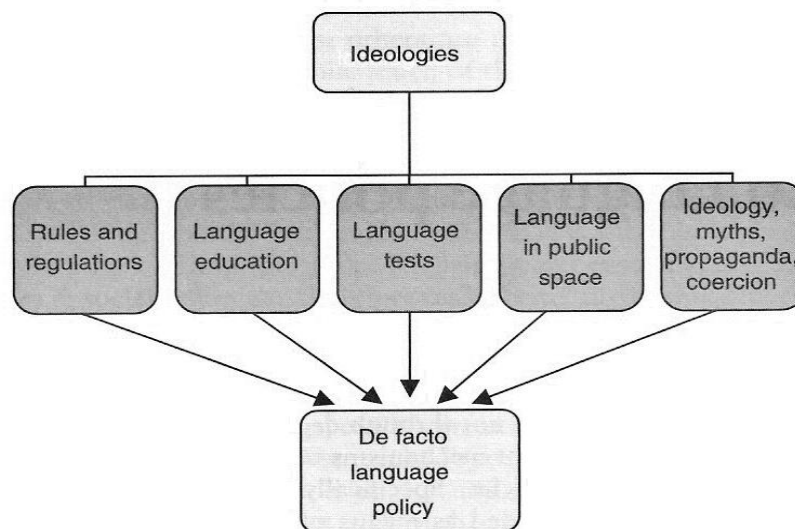


Figure 3: List of mechanisms between ideology and practice
 Source: Shohamy (2006, 58)

In relation to this research project, the ‘language education’ mechanism appears to be the most relevant. However, all of the mechanisms listed will be considered in this thesis. Within an organisation like a school there will be rules and regulations at numerous levels that the pupils, teachers and other staff will be expected to follow. Tests are used as a means of assessment throughout schooling, and although the language might not be being tested directly, most subjects are tested through language. García and Baetens Beardsmore (2009, 367) claim that ‘[t]esting is not neutral since it is a product and agent of ideological agendas. It is often under the control of official, national, or regional authorities, and it is based on specific cultural and pedagogical traditions.’ Consequently, the tests given are an important indication of the language policy goals of those setting the tests. ‘Language in the public space’ is increasingly referred to as the ‘linguistic landscape’ in sociolinguistics. Shohamy (2006, 110) explains that “[l]anguage in the public space” refers to all language items that are displayed in a variety of contexts in the environment’, whilst García describes the key components of the linguistic landscape of the classroom as the

decoration, signs and books (2009, 294). In this research project, the way that the dominant language, French, and the regional language in both of its forms are presented in the classroom and other areas of the school will be an important consideration in the analysis of language policy. ‘Ideology, myths, propaganda, coercion’ refers to efforts made to influence beliefs, which constitutes one of the main strands of the language policy definition that is followed in this thesis. This is a useful model to analyse the processes of language policy-making and to evaluate the effectiveness of the approaches adopted.

Cooper (1989, 46–47) highlights the key questions at the centre of the study of language management in the following way: ‘what *actors* attempted to influence what *behaviors*, of which *people*, for what *ends*, by what *means*, and with what *results*?’ (original emphasis). He devises a three-strand model to organise language management, namely corpus planning, status planning and acquisition planning (Figure 4).

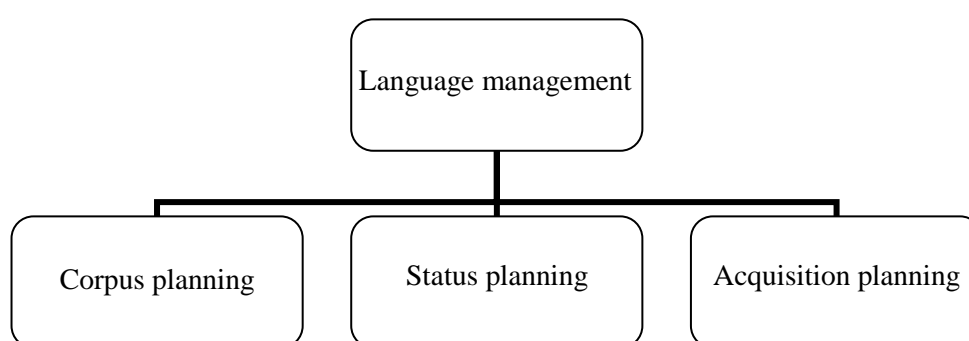


Figure 4: Language management model
Source: Adapted from Cooper (1989)

The term ‘corpus planning’ implies the efforts made to change the grammar of a language, via modernisation, standardisation, renovation or graphisation, and is generally a top-down language management activity. Corpus planning is often

carried out by specially appointed academies and committees. Status planning occurs when an individual or a group makes a conscious effort to maintain, improve or downgrade the social prestige of a language, by, for example, the imposition or restriction of a form of language in specific domains. Finally, acquisition planning concerns the learning, relearning or maintenance of a language and is also widely referred to as language-in-education policy. Fishman (2004, 2006) does not consider acquisition planning as a separate branch of language management, but rather as a component of status planning. He refers to status planning and corpus planning as the ‘two major types of language planning’ (2006, 2), and as ‘two sides of the same language planning coin’ (2004, 80). Cooper argues that a distinction is necessary for acquisition planning, stating that the status planning rubric does not cover fully the area of language spread and the part played by new language users (1989, 33). Mar-Molinero (2000, 79) describes acquisition planning as a development of status planning, and she explains: ‘If status planning improves people’s attitudes to the use of the language, acquisition planning helps them to learn it through education, and use in the media for example.’ The addition of this third language management category is justified, and like the elements of Spolsky’s language policy, the language management categories will be approached as being distinctive yet interrelated in this thesis.

Spolsky (2009) examines language management in key societal domains. In this research project, the domains of the school, the family, the workplace and public linguistic space appear to be the most pertinent, although local, regional and national governments and supranational bodies will also play a part. His comprehensive domain-by-domain examination highlights that individuals are subject to different language policy mechanisms in different areas of their daily lives, and their language

practices and language beliefs may vary according to the domain in which they find themselves at a given time. Hence, the actors, behaviours, ends, conditions, means, decision-making processes and effects described by Cooper (1989, 89) are likely to vary within each domain. Although the main focus of this thesis is the school, it will be necessary to consider language policy in other domains, as they will overlap to a greater or lesser extent.

2.1.2 Language Beliefs

Language beliefs, which are also referred to as language attitudes or language ideologies, are the positive, neutral and negative feelings that individuals or groups hold towards language. Ager (2001) tasks himself with examining the motivations behind the development of language management, which are linked to language beliefs. He highlights the three actors concerned with exacting language management as individuals, communities and states (2001, 6). Ager draws attention to seven key areas of motivation: identity, ideology, image creation, insecurity, inequality, integration and instrumentality. The bias involved in language beliefs revealed by Ager will inevitably affect language management: ‘It is usually the case that people praising a language know it well; it is often their own; and they tend to apply the same positive attitude to its speakers’ (Ager 2001, 25). In other words, the language of the language managers will be promoted. At the macro level this means that, theoretically, the language of the empowered will become the dominant variety in a speech community.

In their research on bilingualism, Hamers and Blanc (2000, 20) discuss the importance of what they refer to as ‘language valorisation’ in the process of formulating language beliefs. The principle suggested here is that the way in which a

language is perceived within the child's social environment will have a significant effect on the relationship that they will develop with that language. Hamers and Blanc (2000, 199) observe that language is both a component and a product of culture, which at the same time moulds, transmits and internalises our cultural representations. It becomes clear that language is an integral feature of human functioning in society; consequently, the values that speakers attach to languages are crucial.

2.1.3 Language Practices

Language practices are the sum of the linguistic choices made by individuals and groups of speakers. Shohamy (2006, 5) lists these as: intonation, speech, space, syntax, grammar, lexicon, sentence length, repetition, tone, content and topic. These choices multiply when languages come into contact. Where there are two languages, or two distinct varieties of a language, present in a speech community, a situation of diglossia may emerge. Ferguson (1959) first gave a name to this phenomenon, and it has since been widely adopted and modified by linguists. In a diglossia, one of the varieties will be used in high prestige (H) domains, whereas the other will be employed in the low (L) domains. Ferguson (1959, 329) devises a list of functions to illustrate how the two varieties might usually be distributed, for example in a church sermon, university lecture or newspaper the H language would normally be employed, while the L language would be used in conversations with family or friends, or in folk literature. Spolsky (1998, 64–65) explains:

Diglossia thus refers to a society that has divided up its domains into two distinct clusters, using linguistic differences to demarcate the boundaries, and offering two clear identities to the members of the community. It is important also to note the political situations in which diglossia often occurs, with the H language associated with power.

In this thesis Ferguson's definition of diglossia will be employed to analyse the distribution of the languages present in different domains at different points in time.

Trudgill (2000, 97) observes that in a diglossic situation '[g]enerally speaking, the high variety has greater prestige than the low, and is often regarded as more beautiful, even if it is less intelligible'. However, positive language ideologies do not always translate into language practices, i.e. a shift towards the admired H language. Spolsky calls on the example of official language management in Ireland, which, after a century of efforts, 'has succeeded only in increasing knowledge but not use of the language' (2004, 223). He suggests that 'the real language policy of a community is more likely to be found in its practices than [*sic*] its management' (2004, 222). Hence, *de jure* language practices, which are set out in legal documents such as constitutions, are not necessarily congruent with actual, *de facto* language practices. Shohamy (2006, 167) views the situation in the following way: 'Language is like life. There is an aspiration for order, for control, for possession, driven by fear of the unknown, of the powers and sources of evil. But there is always the reality that language, like life, cannot be controlled.' This uncontrollability needs to be taken into account, as it can result in a wide variation between the three strands of language policy.

McColl Millar (2005, 199) suggests that '[i]n theory, all varieties of language are equal'. However, in reality, language policy reveals that some languages dominate whilst others are dominated, owing to a multitude of factors. Wardhaugh (1987) perceives this as an inevitable consequence of language contact and regards all languages as being part of a cycle of constant ascendancy and decline. Consequently, language policy is in a constant process of evolution. The reasons why

language policy has changed in France will be examined in the second part of this chapter (cf. section 2.3).

2.2 Fishman's *Reversing Language Shift*

In *Reversing Language Shift* (1991), Fishman offers a systematic approach to assessing the vitality of languages that have suffered a decline in status and use due to the dominance of another language. This process is referred to as a 'language shift'. Fishman labels the former Xish languages and the latter Yish languages, and in the same vein he discusses Xishness/Yishness, and Xmen/Ymen (i.e. speakers of Xish/Yish).² In this thesis, the terms Xish will be used to signal languages other than French, and Yish French. Fishman refers to the phenomenon of reversing language shift as RLS, advocates for such movements as pro-RLSers, and their endeavours as pro-RLS efforts. He explains that it is possible to be an Xman-via-Yish, citing the following examples: 'Jews who do not speak Hebrew have existed for millennia, Irishmen who do not speak Irish have existed for centuries' (1990, 16). Fishman adds that '[t]his ethnoculturally symbolic role of language is not a strange phenomenon. After all, language is the major symbol-system of our species' (1990, 23). Thus it becomes clear that language plays a very important part in the sense of belonging of an individual to a group, although it is not a prerequisite when there is more than one language of communication present.

Fishman devises an eight-stage model to analyse the degree of language shift that has taken place in a community; the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) (Figure 5). Stage 1 of the GIDS represents an Xish language in a stable

² In *Can Threatened Languages be Saved?: Reversing Language Shift, Revisited: A 21st Century Perspective* (2000) the terms 'Xmen' and 'Ymen' are replaced with 'Xian' and 'Yian' respectively, on the grounds of maintaining gender neutrality (Fishman 2000, 481). However, Xmen and Ymen will be retained in this thesis in accordance with the original text (Fishman 1991).

position, present in all of the key H societal domains, despite the Xish community not being politically independent. At the opposite end of the GIDS, stage 8, Yish has replaced Xish in all of the H domains and the majority of the L domains. Xish is spoken only by an elderly population and the language would have to be reassembled from their knowledge in order for it to be taught to a new generation. Fishman's GIDS will be used as a tool to assess the degree of language shift that the Alsatian regional language has experienced and, as a framework, to examine previous and current pro-RLS efforts.

<i>Stage 1:</i> Xish present in education, work sphere, mass media and governmental operations at higher and nationwide levels
<i>Stage 2:</i> Xish in the local and mass media, governmental services
<i>Stage 3:</i> Xish in the local and regional work sphere, among Xmen and Ymen
<i>Stage 4a:</i> State-funded public schools for Xish children <i>Stage 4b:</i> Schools funded and staffed by the Xish community
<i>Stage 5:</i> Extracurricular classes for adults and children to achieve Xish literacy
<i>Stage 6:</i> Oral intergenerational transmission of Xish, acquired in the home–family–neighbourhood setting
<i>Stage 7:</i> Cultural interaction in the Xish community, primarily among the older Generation
<i>Stage 8:</i> Remaining Xish speakers are elderly, the language would need to be reassembled from their knowledge in order for Xish to be taught to a new generation

Figure 5: Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS)

Source: Adapted from Fishman (1991, 395)

Fishman highlights stage 6, the oral intergenerational transmission of Xish, as the most crucial stage in maintaining language vitality, describing it as ‘the heart of the entire intergenerational pursuit’ (1991, 398). Fishman reiterates this belief in *Can Threatened Languages be Saved?* (2000): ‘Ultimately, nothing is as crucial for basic RLS success as intergenerational mother tongue transmission’ (2000, 458). The role of Xish in education occupies stage 4; type 4b refers to schooling funded by the Xish

community, while type 4a implies state-funded education. Fishman discourages the over-valorisation of stage 4 of the GIDS, stating (1991, 372): ‘The importance of the school is best designated as “initiatory” and “contributory” rather than substantially “unique” or “independent”.’ However, he recognises that the school is ‘a tremendously influential setting for RLS-efforts’ (1991, 402). Romaine (1995, 43) echoes this sentiment, stating that: ‘Only when a language is being passed on in the home is there some chance of long-term survival. Otherwise, other efforts to prop up the language elsewhere, e.g. in school or church, may end up being largely symbolic or ceremonial.’ Thus, this presents a challenge to language-in-education policy-makers if their main aim is language revitalisation.

The home–family–neighbourhood domain is difficult to influence once language shift has occurred. In his discussion of the ‘linguistic market’ and the school, Bourdieu (1991, 57) claims that: ‘this institution has the monopoly in the large-scale production of producers/consumers’ (cf. section 4.2.1 for a further discussion of Bourdieu’s linguistic market). The importance of the school in pro-RLS efforts has been highlighted elsewhere. Acknowledging the language shift away from the regional languages (henceforth RLs) in France and Britain, Judge (2007, 233) concludes that ‘in the short term, everything depends on education in the RLs’. Her reference to the ‘short term’ here implies that stage 4 of the GIDS can be seen as a crucial temporary step, in the hope that intergenerational transmission will be restored. In a typical situation, where Yish has replaced Xish in the H domains as the result of a language shift, stages 1 to 4 of the GIDS would typically strengthen the position of Xish within the diglossia, whilst stages 5 to 8 would be secured by the L language. However, in the event that language shift has also taken place at these

stages, the aim of the introduction, or re-introduction of Xish in education (stage 4) can be to act as a catalyst to provoke a reversal of the language shift.

In this thesis, Fishman's GIDS will act as a theoretical framework, alongside the tripartite language policy model proposed by Spolsky. Shohamy's language policy mechanisms will be used to analyse the transition of ideology into practice. Cooper's definition of language management will be employed as a further guiding principle. This will provide a strong basis to look at language policy, and particularly language-in-education policy, in both France in general and the region of Alsace in particular.

2.3 Language Policy in France

The case study of France features in many studies of language policy. Judge and Judge (2000, 106) note that ‘France is famous for linguistic interventionism’, whilst Spolsky (2004, 63) refers to France as ‘the paradigmatic case for strong ideology and management’. In the following section there will be an examination of the ways in which, and the reasons why, France has earned this reputation. The impact of official French language policy on the nation’s former and current language management, ideologies and practices will be considered, before looking more closely at language-in-education policy in France in the next chapter.

2.3.1 The Beginning of a French Language Policy

The earliest text written in French is recognised as the Strasbourg Oaths, sworn by Charles the Bald and Louis the German in 842.³ Although the content of the Oaths was not concerned with language policy, Judge (2007, 12) states that this was an important act in recognising language as a symbol of national identity. The first key event in the history of the management of the French language occurred in 1539, when the Edict of Villers-Cotterêts declared that from that time Latin would be replaced by French in all legal matters. Spolsky recognises the general shift away from Latin as ‘a milestone in the development of national languages’ (2009, 117), the corollary of which was a change in direction in the country’s language policy. Adrey notes that although this event ‘is largely seen as the birth of “country-wide” language planning’ (2009, 110), the widespread association of language and nation had not been established at that time.

³ Ayres-Bennett (1996, 16) refers to the language in which the Strasbourg Oaths were written as ‘the vernacular of Gaul’. The author highlights the debate on whether the language used can indeed be called French, but she concludes that the text is sufficiently different from Latin (1996, 21).

Schiffman (1996, 84) explains the effect that the Edict of Villers-Cotterêts had in the following way:

Each time some new territory was added to France (and the history of France from at least 1539 to the French revolutionary wars is of gradual territorial expansion) a feeble effort was made to announce that henceforward the *ordonnance* of Villers-Cotterêts was to be obeyed in the new territories. But in fact this edict was largely ignored, even for written purposes [...]

Hence, as a language policy mechanism, this specific piece of legislation was not wholly successful in translating the ideologies into language practices. Sibille (2000, 16) doubts that the Edict of Villers-Cotterêts was principally designed to enforce the French language in place of Latin, but rather the RLs. Regardless of the language, or languages, that the language policy-makers sought to replace, this early example of language management was an important first step in a tradition of status planning regarding the French language, imposing it in one of the main H domains in an emerging diglossic situation.

2.3.2 Pre-Revolutionary French Language Policy

Adamson concludes that French language policy of the sixteenth and seventeenth century was aimed at maintaining the status quo, so that those in power retained their elevated position, whilst creating ‘an excluded majority’ amongst the rest of the population (2007, 84). Wright (2004, 31) explains that ‘Absolute monarchs do not need a do not need a linguistically cohesive population’; bilingual bureaucrats acted as a means of communicating decrees and orders in feudal France. Judge (2007, 7) observes that while on the other side of the Channel, the English language emerged from the people, in France, at least until the eighteenth century and the fall of the *Ancien Régime*, French was the preserve of the ruling classes. Wright (2000a, 418)

highlights the dichotomous relationship between the ruling classes and the general public at the time: ‘They were subjects not citizens, not consulted on affairs of the State and not needful of a language in common with their ruler.’ Thus, in the centuries that preceded the Revolution, a unified language policy was not a priority of the State. Anderson (2006, 42) contends that prior to the creation of the nation-state language choice was ‘a gradual, unselfconscious, pragmatic, not to say haphazard development’; at that time the use of languages was linked to convenience rather than acting as a symbol national identity.

Founded by Cardinal Richelieu in 1635, the creation of the Académie française signalled the beginning of a long tradition of corpus planning in France that continues to the present time. The Académie française consists of forty members, named the *immortels*, whom it describes as ‘poets, novelists, men of the theatre, philosophers, doctors, scientists, anthropologists, art critics, servicemen, statesmen, men of the Church, who have all particularly illustrated the French language’ (2012a).⁴ One of the principal tasks demanded of the Académie française was to produce a dictionary of the French language; the first dictionary was published fifty-nine years later, in 1694. To date, nine editions of the dictionary have been prepared (Académie française 2012b); Spolsky (2009, 236) comments: ‘For all its pre-eminence then, the Académie française has been more of a symbol than an active language cultivation agency, but a stately emblem of the seriousness with which France considers its national language.’ Hence, through its efforts, the Académie française has also played a role in raising the status of the French language: it acts as

⁴ ‘Elle rassemble des poètes, des romanciers, des hommes de théâtre, des philosophes, des médecins, des hommes de science, des ethnologues, des critiques d’art, des militaires, des hommes d’État, des hommes d’Église, qui ont tous illustré particulièrement la langue française’ (Académie française 2012a).

a badge of France's language ideologies, placing the national language in a privileged position in comparison with the other languages spoken in France.

Following the Treaty of Rastadt, signed in 1714 by Louis XIV and the Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI, French became the language of international diplomacy, elevating the language to a position of high global prestige, although it was not the language of many Frenchmen. Hence, at this point in history, in France those mainly in positions of power can be defined using Fishman's model (1991, 16) as Ymen-via-Yish; the rest of the French population was largely composed of Ymen-via-Xish; and, internationally, there were many thousands of Xmen-via-Yish.

2.3.3 The Revolution and the Creation of the French Nation-State

The promotion of the French language in France was accelerated significantly at the time of the 1789 Revolution, which was led by two political groupings: the Jacobins and the Girondins. The Girondins favoured a federal approach, which would allow the regions to retain their unique identities. However, the more influential Jacobin revolutionaries believed in a policy of 'one state, one nation, one language' (Judge 2002, 44) to achieve *liberté, égalité* and *fraternité* (freedom, equality and fraternity). Their ideal was to mould France into a nation-state, that is to say a politically independent state which is formed by a people who share a common national identity (OED, 2013). Anderson (2006) describes this phenomenon as the creation of an 'imagined community', as 'the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion' (2006, 6). In contrast to the feudal system, in which the people remained in their regions and had limited access to resources in society (Sutherland 2003, 5), under the revolutionaries' vision each inhabitant of

France would have an equal opportunity to increase their social mobility. French was viewed by the Jacobins ‘as the embodiment of civilisation and progress’ whilst the RLs were regarded ‘as parochial vestiges of the ancien régime, the sooner forgotten the better’ (May 2001, 158–59). This approach did not make any concession for the linguistic human rights of the millions of RL speakers in France at the time; French monolingualism was the ideal supported by the new political leaders.

The Jacobin choice to privilege standard French as the one language to unite the nation was not obviously congruous with the ideals of the new Republic; Schiffman (1996, 278) refers to the Revolution as ‘a victory for *monarchist* language policy’ (original emphasis). Lodge (1993, 187) notes that the French language had previously been employed ‘as a means of social differentiation’: French was the language of the dominant, and the RLs the languages of the dominated. Henceforth, French was promoted as a language to unite all sectors of French society. In its quest for the equality of all citizens, the republican model rejects the recognition of minority groups in France, and therefore it has been difficult for communities, such as RL-speaking communities, to claim any group language rights (Oakes 2011a).

In 1790–92, a prominent revolutionary figure, the Abbé Henri Grégoire, conducted a survey by the way of questionnaires and interviews to gauge the number of French-speakers in France at that time. Grégoire reported that six million citizens had no knowledge of French; the same number would struggle to keep up a sustained conversation in the language; and only three million could speak it fluently (Walter 1988, 115). Although Lodge (1993, 199) suggests that the findings may have been exaggerated, and the results covered only fifteen million people out of a population of approximately twenty-five million, it is evident that French was not spoken by the majority of citizens of France at the turn of the eighteenth century. Following

Spolsky's claim that the real language policy of a community is most likely to lie in its practices (2004, 222), it is seen that, in many areas of the Republic, the *de facto* language policy was incongruous with the Jacobin ideals.

Commenting on the general emergence of the nation-state, Shohamy (2006, 25) notes that '[i]t was then that language became one of the main identifiers of membership, and of inclusion and exclusion, and when the ruling groups started monopolizing language'. This recalls the behaviour of French language policy-makers at the time of the Revolution. Wright (2000a, 420) contends that the privileging of the French language by the revolutionaries mirrored the promotion of national languages in other countries during the nation-building process. Bertrand Barère de Vieuzac's report to the Committee of Public Safety underlined the desire to exclude the RLs of France from the new Republic: 'Federalism and superstition speak lower Breton; emigration and hatred of the Republic speak German; the counter-Revolution speaks Italian and fanaticism speaks Basque' (translated from Sibille 2000, 18).⁵ Hence, from the time of the Revolution the language ideology touted by many of the leading revolutionary figures, including Barère de Vieuzac, was that it was no longer possible to be a Yman-via-Xish: in the context of the nation-state, speaking Xish identified the individual with being an Xman.

The revolutionaries highlighted schooling as one of the key language policy mechanisms to transform their ideologies into actual practice. The 1794 8 *pluviôse* *An II* law decreed that French-speaking primary education should be established in every commune of the Republic. However, in practice this proved to be very difficult, and in some cases impossible, due to a shortage of French-speaking

⁵ 'Le fédéralisme et la superstition parlent bas-breton; l'émigration et la haine de la République parlent allemand; la contre-révolution parle italien et le fanatisme parle basque' (Barère de Vieuzac quoted in Sibille 2000, 18).

teachers. Thus it was the implementation of the mechanism, and not the effectiveness of the mechanism itself, that halted the State's language policy plans at this time.

Language practices did not alter immediately in the aftermath of the Revolution. Schiffman (1996, 112) highlights the 'staggering problems' facing the language policy-makers at that time, namely 'war, inflation, invasion, insurrection, intrigues etc.' These obstacles can be seen as a reason why the revolutionaries did not achieve their goals with their language policy devices at that time. Under the rule of Napoléon Bonaparte, First Consul, and then Emperor of France, the main focus of the Republic's attentions moved away from language. He reportedly said of the Alsatians: 'What does it matter that they speak German, as long as they draw their swords in French' (translated from Boswell 1999, 573).⁶ However, in spite of this more relaxed stance, the monolingual French ideology had been implanted firmly into the national psyche and the widespread language shift towards French had been initiated.

2.3.4 The Nineteenth Century: Establishment of French Obligatory Education

The 1833 Guizot law established primary schooling for boys in French parishes (*communes*) of over 500 inhabitants, although the schooling was neither free nor compulsory. The policy meant that girls and all children in smaller villages were excluded from the education system at this time. The Guizot legislation also imposed *écoles normales*, teacher training schools, in order to meet the demand for French-speaking teachers, a practical step that had frustrated the efforts of language-in-education planners at the time of the Revolution. However, Weber (1976, 306) reveals that in the mid-nineteenth century, teachers were not necessarily French-

⁶ 'Qu'importe qu'ils parlent allemand pourvu qu'ils sabrent en français' (Napoléon Bonaparte quoted in Boswell 1999, 573).

speaking: ‘Where French was not native to the region, some teachers were as ignorant of it as their charges; and others bent it to their needs in a special pidgin, as in Cerdagne, where the school idiom was a strange mixture of Latin, Catalan, and French.’ In such a case, it is hard to imagine that the pupils achieved an adequate level of fluency in the national language at school.

Weber claims that while there were 1.2 million pupils enrolled in education in France in 1833, by 1847 this number had risen to over 3.5 million children (1976, 307). Furthermore, the number of teacher training schools rose from 38 to 47 during this period. This would help to prepare the teachers needed to realise the language acquisition planning ambitions of the Third Republic and to fulfil the ‘language education’ language policy mechanism described by Shohamy.

Between the years of 1881 and 1884 the Jules Ferry education laws established free, obligatory and secular primary education for all French children. Weber (1976, 314) highlights the significance of the compulsory schooling of girls as a consequence of the Ferry laws; there is a well-attested trend in western society that females are more likely than males to adopt the prestige language variety (Trudgill 2000, 70). Females are also more likely to transmit the language to their children, which instigates further language shift. Blackwood describes the new schools as ‘local centres for the gallicisation of France’ (2008, 28), which reflects upon the ideology behind the French language-in-education policy at that time. The use of languages other than French in the school domain was to be punished, both physically and psychologically. Weber recalls the policy employed to devalue and eliminate the use of the RL in Brittany: ‘Children caught using it were systematically punished— put on dry bread and water or sent to clean out the school latrine’ (1976, 313). He adds that a ‘favourite punishment’ was the use of a ‘token of shame’, such

as a stick, a wooden plank or a peg, that would be given to a child speaking their home language and then passed on to the next child caught doing the same; at the end of the day the child left holding the token would be punished. Considering this extreme language management, it is not surprising that language ideologies and practices, at least in the school domain, began to change. Trudgill (2000, 200) reveals the impact that the devalorisation of a language can have on a child:

To suggest to children that their language, and that of those with whom they identify, is inferior in some way is to imply that *they* are inferior. This, in turn, is likely to lead either to alienation from the school and school values, or to a rejection of the group to which they belong. (Original emphasis)

French school children were left with a difficult choice; either to adopt the school language in order to achieve academic and social progress, or retain their home language and links to their cultural heritage, with unfavourable consequences. In a developing diglossia between French and the RLs, the imposition of French in education guaranteed the language in another H domain, and following Fishman's GIDS, presented significant obstacles to the use of the RLs at stages one and four.

2.3.5 Late Nineteenth-Century France

The end of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of a significant social change in France. The country became increasingly industrialised under the Third Republic, although Weber notes that the rural and agricultural populations remained the majority until the early twentieth century (1976, 115). Nevertheless, an increasing percentage of the population sought work in towns and cities.

Furthermore, the expansion of the railways dating from the mid-nineteenth century meant that the population was more mobile than ever before; these factors aided in making the national language, the emerging lingua franca, an attractive choice. The

economic and social advantages of knowing French became more apparent away from the RL-speaking areas, which worked in the favour of the national language policy.

Founded in Paris in 1883, the Alliance française was created by a group of prominent French figures, with the aim of promoting the French language beyond French borders. Adamson (2007, 56) claims that the defeat of the French in the Prussian War in 1871, and the subsequent loss of a significant part of its territory, acted as a catalyst for this status planning action. She refers to the organisation as ‘the friendly face of French’ (2007, 55); the Alliance française lists amongst its missions: the development of the teaching and use of the French language worldwide, the spread of France’s intellectual and moral influence, and the promotion of cultural exchanges and cultural diversity (Alliance française 2012).⁷ The Alliance française has emerged as an important tool in French language status and acquisition planning, as well as language diffusion.

2.3.6 The First and Second World Wars

One of the most significant changes to language practices in France in the twentieth century was not the result of explicit state-driven language management, but rather as the corollary of the First and Second World Wars. Walter (1988, 126) highlights that although regiments were initially grouped into local conscripts, where it was possible for them to continue to communicate in their RLs, after a large number of losses, soldiers from all over France were put together, and the common language used was French. She notes (1988, 126) that these language practices were continued when the

⁷ ‘La Fondation Alliance française a pour mission : de développer dans le monde l’enseignement et l’usage de la langue française ; de contribuer à accroître l’influence intellectuelle et morale de la France et l’intérêt de toutes les cultures francophones ; de favoriser les échanges entre cultures et de contribuer en général à l’épanouissement de la diversité culturelle’ (Alliance française 2012).

soldiers returned home in 1918: ‘After four years of this regime, the habit had set in and, when they returned, the men continued to speak French at home. Furthermore, their children had less and less opportunities to hear and speak the local dialect.’⁸

Lodge (1993, 192) suggests that bilinguals rarely give up one of their languages in the course of their lifetime, but that language shift takes place when one generation only passes one of their languages on to the next. Hence, the First World War acted as a catalyst for a significant language shift among the descendants of the veterans.

During the interwar period, groups of political activists in several of the RL-speaking areas initiated autonomist and regionalist movements. Blackwood (2008, 37) notes that on Corsica, the RL was used as a political gesture, an emblem of differentiation in a highly centralised State. He comments: ‘To speak Corsican outwith a domestic environment identified the speaker with a specific political standpoint’ (2008, 37). As a consequence, in the Second World War the RL speakers were accused of being disloyal to the State, recalling the anti-regional rhetoric of Barère de Vieuzac during the Revolution. After the Second World War, a fear of being associated with fascism led to a change in language beliefs and practices. Particularly in the regions of Alsace, Lorraine and Corsica, where the RLs spoken were often perceived as varieties of German and Italian, which were former enemy languages, the situation was especially sensitive. The symbolic ideal of allegiance to the State via linguistic allegiance that had been promoted since the Revolution was now accepted by an increasing percentage of the French population, and sparked a significant language shift towards French. Dorian proposes the term ‘language tip’ to describe a sudden, dramatic shift in language practices (1981, 51). In relation to

⁸ ‘Après quatre ans de ce régime, l’habitude était prise et, de retour dans leurs foyers, les hommes avaient continué à parler français à la maison. Leurs enfants ont aussi eu de moins en moins l’occasion d’entendre et de parler le patois’ (Walter 1988, 126).

France as a whole, the period between 1914 and 1945 could be described as the time when language practices ‘tipped’ towards the national language.

2.3.7 The Deixonne Law

The Deixonne law, passed in 1951, officially recognised the RLs in the domain of public education for the first time. The legislation initially permitted Basque, Breton, Catalan and Occitan to be taught for one hour per week, strictly on an optional basis, at the discretion of the teachers and the parents involved. The lack of availability of RL-speaking teachers posed a considerable obstacle to the teaching of the nominated languages. Owing to the organisation of the civil service system in France, whereby teachers can be posted to any area of the State, even if parents requested RL-teaching for their children, there may not have been a teacher available who spoke the language. Furthermore, it is likely that previous language ideologies that severely devalued the RLs in the school domain led to a feeling of unease in teaching in them. The situation of RL-teaching in the 1950s could be compared to that of French in the early nineteenth century; the possibilities that new legislation provided were frustrated in some cases as there was a shortage of qualified teachers. However, unlike the case of French in the century previous, the State was unwilling to provide further support, such as teacher training, in the RLs. Article 2 of the Deixonne legislation states that the languages may be used to help the teaching of French, which suggests that one of the law’s key motivations was the acquisition of the national language, rather than the maintenance of the RLs.

The Deixonne law excluded the three other languages that are generally regarded as making up the seven principal RLs of France, namely Alsatian, Corsican and Flemish. State language-in-education policy-makers reasoned that these were not

RLs of France, but rather dialects of foreign languages (Corsican was added to the legislation in 1974; Alsatian in 1988). Introduced only six years after the end of the Second World War, it is perhaps unsurprising that the State was unfavourable to the promotion of German and Italian in the school system.

In spite of the limited possibilities the law offered regarding RL revitalisation, Blackwood contends that the real value of the legislation for the RLs was symbolic: ‘the *loi Deixonne* broke the long-held assumption that French and French alone had a place within the school system’ (2008, 48). For the first time in French history, the RLs had an official role in the classroom, which is regarded as a crucial language policy domain associated with H language varieties. Ideologically, it signalled that the RLs were an acceptable speech form, even if only marginally.

2.3.8 The Decolonisation Process and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie

During the 1960s France lost the territories that it had gained through its second wave of colonisation. The decolonisation process had a damaging impact on the prestige of the French language on two fronts. It signified a loss of influence of French on an international stage, and also resulted in a large number of migrants, and their languages, moving to France. Hélot (2008, 14) argues that the manner in which France reacted to decolonisation has affected its migrant language policy:

As long as the history of colonisation is ignored [...] the languages of migrants will continue to be viewed with suspicion, as if they were the sign of a threatening heterogeneity, in a society which would prefer to see itself as homogeneous and united around its language.

Similar to its earlier treatment of the RLs, the State denied the new languages any official status, and the new citizens were expected to assimilate linguistically. As a

corollary of the influx of migrants from the former colonies, *de facto* multilingualism in France posed a new challenge to the dominance of French.

In the aftermath of the decolonisation process, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (International Organisation of la Francophonie) was founded in 1970 by the President of Senegal, Léopold Sédar Senghor. The Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (henceforth OIF) has its headquarters in Paris, but France does not have any authority over the organisation and its summits take place in alternating member states. Nevertheless, Adrey claims that the Francophonie movement, which he refers to as the 'French commonwealth', 'has somehow compensated for decolonisation and maintained some French influence in one of the largest intergovernmental organisations' (2009, 131). However, Battye *et al* (2000, 48) highlight a fundamental difference between the British Commonwealth and the worldwide French-speaking community:

La francophonie might be conceived of as the French equivalent to the British Commonwealth, but, while the symbolic centre of the Commonwealth is the British crown, no similar apolitical figure could be identified in France, and, therefore, the symbolic basis of *la francophonie* is none other than the single language which unites the fifty-two member-states, namely French.

The OIF plays an important role in maintaining the status of the French language, and also the international prestige of France.

As part of the mission statement of the OIF, its language policy is described in the following way:

The Francophonie movement sees to the promotion of French as a tool of communication and vector of culture and, by extension, as a language of international communication, of education and as a support to an academic,

scientific and culturally innovative dynamism. It combines this action with its commitment to multilingualism. (OIF 2004)⁹

The membership list of the OIF reveals that at the time of writing there are fifty-six members, with an additional nineteen states and governments who have the status ‘observers’ (OIF 2012a). There is no obligation for the member states of the OIF to have French as one of its official languages; of the seventy-five states and governments currently linked to the OIF, French is an official language of only thirty-two (OIF 2012b). The website of the organisation explains its admission policy in the following way:

The fact that French is not the official language of the country requesting admission does not create an obstacle to its joining. It is the position that the French language has in the country in question that is a determining admission criterion. (OIF 2012c)¹⁰

Adamson (2007, 73) reveals that the recent inclusion of countries such as Bulgaria, Greece and Macedonia has had a negative effect on French perception of the OIF: ‘Many people in France believe that the loosening of the criteria for membership of *la Francophonie* has been counter-productive and that the credibility of the movement has been seriously weakened.’ This reaction reflects an essentialist view of language that has been internalised by the people of France as the result of deliberate national language policy. Thus it seems that the desire of the organisation to expand its international influence has lowered its prestige in France. Nevertheless,

⁹ ‘La Francophonie veille au renforcement du français comme outil de communication et vecteur culturel et, par extension, comme langue de communication internationale, d’enseignement et de support à un dynamisme intellectuel, scientifique et culturel novateur. Elle associe cette action à son engagement en faveur du plurilinguisme’ (OIF 2004).

¹⁰ ‘Que le français ne soit pas la langue officielle du pays requérant ne constitue cependant pas un obstacle à son adhésion. C’est au regard de la place qu’occupe la langue française dans le pays concerné que sont examinées les demandes d’adhésion’ (OIF 2012c).

the OIF remains a symbol of the commitment of French-speaking countries to the protection and promotion of their language.

2.3.9 The Defence of French against English: Etienne's *Parlez-vous franglais?*, the Bas-Lauriol and Toubon Laws

Etienne's *Parlez-vous franglais?*, published in 1964, marked a new direction for language policy in France. After successfully eliminating the hegemony of Latin and the RLs, and its policy to ignore migrant languages, English was now deemed the greatest threat to the French language. Alarmed by the 'epidemic' of anglicisms being incorporated into the French language, Etienne (1964, 46) warned that efforts made by language policy-makers up to that point had not succeeded:

Turn on the radio, the television; open your eyes in a restaurant, in a hardware shop. You notice that, in spite of numerous efforts, and in the most important newspapers, the epidemic is only spreading in scale, in depth. Stop off at the restoroute (an American portmanteau word); you will be offered, not far from Paris, un *Baby scotch*, un *steack* (sic), un *cheeseburger steack* (sic), des *hotdogs*, un *club sandwich*.¹¹

Although Etienne may have exaggerated the actual influence of the English language in society, the issue was widely debated in France, and it led to a feeling of uncertainty regarding the future of French, a language that had traditionally been celebrated for its purity, and safeguarded by institutions such as the Académie française. Crystal (2000, 77) notes that cultural assimilation can be one of the first steps towards language death, and lexical borrowing such as that displayed by Etienne provides a clear example of a dominant language influencing another.

¹¹ 'Au fait : tournez le bouton de la radio, de la télé; ouvrez les yeux au restaurant, chez le droguiste. Vous constaterez que, malgré tant d'efforts, tant d'articles, et dans les plus grands journaux, l'épidémie ne fait que gagner en étendue, en profondeur. Arrêtez-vous au restoroute (mot-valise à l'américaine) ; on vous y offrira, non loin de Paris, un *Baby scotch*, un *steack* (sic), un *cheeseburger steack* (sic), des *hot dogs*, un *club sandwich*' (Etienne 1964, 46).

However, in a world that was becoming increasingly globalised, where language contact is the rule rather than the exception, the use of loan words from other languages has become inevitable.

Passed in 1975, the Bas Lauriol law made the use of French compulsory in a number of public domains, including public signage, advertising and in employing staff. Blackwood (2008, 57) explains the impact of the law: ‘Language practices were therefore subject to the law of the land and French was to be used in virtually all formal exchanges, spoken as well as written.’ Although the law was generally derided due to the difficulty of enforcing the legislation in some circumstances, and the leniency of the fines if someone was caught breaking it, its implementation signalled a significant event in French language status planning. The legislation was replaced by the Toubon law in 1994. Article 1 of the Toubon law reiterates the H prestige position of French, and states that: ‘Language of the Republic by virtue of the Constitution, the French language is a fundamental element of the personality and the heritage of France. It is the language of education, work, public exchanges and services.’¹² This precision further impedes the RLs and the other languages of France from developing a legitimate position in French society.

Judge (2007) notes an important change in attitudes in French society towards official language policy between 1975 and 1994. She observes (2007, 23) that although the Bas Lauriol law was passed ‘unanimously’, the reaction in France to the 1994 law was different:

[...] the Toubon law gave rise to much controversy in Parliament and much ridicule in the press, the mood of the country having changed partly because English had become an inescapable aspect of French life. Doubts were also growing as to the justification of the destruction of the RLs since the modern

¹² ‘Langue de la République en vertu de la Constitution, la langue française est un élément fondamental de la personnalité et du patrimoine de la France. Elle est la langue de l’enseignement, du travail, des échanges et des services publics’ (Toubon Law).

concept of human rights, as championed by the European Parliament and the Council of Europe, proclaims the right to linguistic freedom.

Consequently, although official attitudes remained unaltered between the passing of the two laws, there was an increased feeling of unease amongst the French public regarding the State's efforts to achieve official monolingualism. As one of the main features of language policy, a widespread change in language ideologies is significant.

2.3.10 French Language Agencies

A key feature of post-Second World War language policy in France has been the creation, and recreation, of a number of agencies founded to develop, promote and protect the French language. The Haut comité pour la défense et l'expansion de la langue française (High Committee for the Defence and Expansion of the French Language) is the agency that has seen the most change since its creation in 1966. In 1973 the establishment's name was altered to the Haut comité de la langue française (High Committee for the French Language); in 1984 it was reorganised into two other committees: the Comité consultatif (Consultative Committee) and the Commissariat général à la langue française (General Commissariat for the French Language). In 1989 these bodies were replaced by the Conseil supérieur de la langue française (High Council for the French Language) and the Délégation générale à la langue française (DGLF) (General Delegation for the French Language). Most recently, this last agency was renamed the Délégation générale à la langue française et aux langues de France (DGLFLF) (General Delegation for the French Language and the Languages of France) in 2001. The DGLFLF explains that the reason for the 2001 redesignation was 'to mark the State's recognition of the linguistic diversity of

our country' (2012).¹³ This was undoubtedly a welcome event for regional and minority language activists in France, as it marked an important milestone in the State's recognition of the languages. However, Adamson (2007, 16) questions the effectiveness of French policy towards its language agencies:

The lack of continuity and the confusion caused by the re-naming and re-positioning of the government agencies cannot fail to limit their efficiency and to give an impression of successive governments involved in crisis management rather than controlled long-term planning.

Therefore, the efforts of agencies conceived to raise the status of the language could be counter-productive. Similar to the expansion of the OIF, it seems that the re-modelling of language management measures can in fact have an adverse effect on the perceived status of the language involved.

A large number of the language agencies established in France in the twentieth century were concerned with corpus planning; this trend started with the creation of the Commission de terminologie technique (Commission of Technical Terminology) in 1933. Adamson (2007, 12) notes that '[f]rom this time on, it becomes difficult to keep track of all the government agencies involved with terminology and vocabulary.' Some of the key agencies are: the Comité consultatif de langage scientifique (Consultative Committee of Scientific Language) (founded in 1952), the Comité d'études des termes techniques français (Committee of Studies of French technical Terms) (1954), the Office du vocabulaire français (Office for French vocabulary) (1957), the Commission de terminologie pour l'enrichissement de la langue française (Terminological Commission for the Enrichment of the French Language) (1972), and Franterm (1980). The Commission générale de terminologie

¹³ 'Enfin, en 2001, cette dernière est devenue Délégation générale à la langue française et aux langues de France pour marquer la reconnaissance par l'État de la diversité linguistique de notre pays' (DGLFLF 2012).

et néologie (General Commission of Terminology and Neology) (1996) was established following the implementation of the Toubon law (Adamson 2007, 12). The aim of these agencies has been to equip the French language in order to cope with societal demands; once again, the enthusiasm with which French language policy-makers have approached language planning can be seen as devaluing the process to some extent.

2.3.11 Progress for the RLs in Education

It is in the domain of education that the RLs have made the greatest progress in achieving official recognition since the 1951 Deixonne law. A network of private bilingual schools has been established in France, following parents' initiatives for the most part. They are widely known as associative schools (*écoles associatives*) as they are founded in accordance with a 1901 law that permits citizens of France to form non-profit associations. The Ikastola Basque-medium associative schools were created in the Basque-speaking area of south-western France in 1969; in 1976 the Bressola schools were set up in French Catalonia; one year later, the first Diwan school was opened in Brittany; the Occitan Calandretas were established in 1979; and lastly, 1991 saw the opening of the first ABCM Zweisprachigkeit schools in Alsace (two schools opened in the neighbouring Moselle *département* of the Lorraine region in 1997). Most of the associative schools favour a full immersion model in the RL, although the ABCM schools follow a partial immersion model (with a set number of hours taught through French and the RL). In spite of it being considered as one of the core RLs of France alongside the languages mentioned above, there are no associative schools for Corsican, although there are public school bilingual sections. Judge (2002, 68) suggests that the continued existence of the partial and full

RL immersion schools is the result of ‘the political explosion that would have followed any attempt to close them’; and so as the result of tolerance rather than the support of the State. However, in a speech delivered shortly before he became president in 1981, François Mitterrand illustrated a willingness to promote and support actively the RLs at state-level:

The time has come for a status of the languages and cultures of France that recognises a true existence. The time has come to open the school doors wide for them, allowing them to be broadcast on the radio and television, to give them the proper place that they deserve in public life.¹⁴ (Translated from Giordan 2000, 5)

Under Mitterrand’s presidency, the Savary education bills of 1982 and 1983 introduced the possibility for public school bilingual sections to open in France. The education bills also advised on the training of RL teachers, and constituted a very significant step forward in RL acquisition planning. However, immersion schooling has not been integrated into the public education system, as it does not comply with the ideology of the Republic. Spolsky (2004, 69) suggests that the progress that has been made for the RLs has been the result of a fear of ‘interfering with’ RL movements. Education reforms since 2000 have introduced the teaching of two languages other than French (RLs or foreign languages) in public schooling; the first language from the age of five, and a second language from the age of twelve. However, Hélot (2003, 260) suggests that this approach to promote multilingualism is the result of French protectionist policies again attempting to contest the dominance of English.

¹⁴ ‘Le temps est venu d’un statut des langues et cultures de France qui leur reconnaisse une existence réelle. Le temps est venu de leur ouvrir grandes les portes de l’école, de la radio et de la télévision permettant leur diffusion, de leur accorder toute la place qu’elles méritent dans la vie publique’ (Mitterrand quoted in Giordan 2000, 5).

Hélot highlights that while bilingual education is being supported for the RLs, the same opportunities have not been made available for most of the other minority languages in France: ‘Paradoxically, in our classes there are numerous students who, as a result of immigration, are already bilingual, but whose bilingualism remains invisible at school, ignored by society, or even discredited’ (2007b, 12).¹⁵ Hence, while French language-in-education policy has moved away from its monolingual republican management, ideology and practices, linguistic equality is not being achieved as some languages are still excluded. A closer examination of bilingual education will follow in chapter four, including a further discussion of the development of bilingual education in France.

2.3.12 1992: An Amendment to the French Constitution

Although language policy in France had implicitly prioritised the French language as the *de jure* official language of the State from the signing of the Edict of Villers Cotterêts, a language policy that was reinforced from the time of the Revolution, Article 2 of the 1958 French Constitution was amended on 25 June 1992 to read: ‘The language of the Republic is French.’¹⁶ Article 2 of the 1954 Constitution also declares that: ‘The national emblem is the blue, white and red flag’; ‘The national anthem is the Marseillaise’; ‘The motto of the Republic is *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*’; ‘Its principle is: government of the people, by the people and for the people’. The constitutional amendment was a momentous event in French language status planning; Oakes (2011a, 57) describes it as ‘the new Ordonnance of Villers-

¹⁵ ‘Paradoxalement, il y a dans nos classes de nombreux élèves qui, issus de l’immigration, sont déjà bilingues mais dont le bilinguisme reste invisible à l’école, ignoré par la société ou encore déconsidéré’ (Hélot 2007b, 12).

¹⁶ ‘Article 2 : La langue de la République est le français. L’emblème national est le drapeau tricolore, bleu, blanc, rouge. L’hymne national est la "Marseillaise". La devise de la République est "Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité". Son principe est : gouvernement du peuple, par le peuple et pour le peuple’ (French Constitution of 4 October 1954).

Cotterêts’ which in 1539 acted to impose French over Latin, and in the process also privileged its use over other languages spoken in France. In addition to the legal implications of French now being the only official language of France, the place of French as a symbolic cornerstone of the Republic is unmistakable. It is widely accepted that the Constitution was amended in order to protect the French language from the hegemony of English, following the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in the February of the same year (Blackwood 2008, 74). However, the amendment also set French apart from the other languages spoken in France as the only officially recognised language of the Republic.

Following the 1992 revision of the Constitution, Boyer (2001, 82) depicts the official recognition of multilingualism in France in the following way (Figure 6):

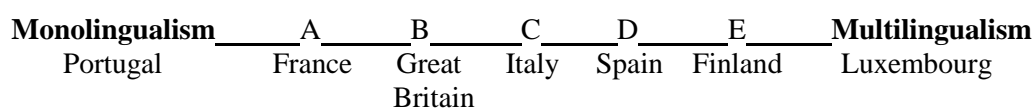


Figure 6: Scale of official recognition of multilingualism
Source: Boyer (2001, 82)

The positioning of France between Portugal, which Boyer describes as ‘effectively a monolingual country’, and Great Britain, which: ‘presents a degree of glottopolitical “tolerance” until now slightly better than that of France’ (2001, 82),¹⁷ will disappoint French RL activists. After the legal recognition, albeit limited, of the RLs in education, Article 2 of the French Constitution restricts the further official empowerment of any languages other than French.

¹⁷ Boyer (2001, 82) describes Portugal as ‘un pays effectivement monolingue’, whilst Great Britain ‘présente un degré de «tolérance» glottopolitique jusqu’ici légèrement supérieur à celui de la France.’

2.3.13 The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

It is necessary to break from the chronological order followed here to look at the impact that the European institutions have had on French language policy since the mid-twentieth century to the present time. In 1972, French President Georges Pompidou claimed that '[t]here is no place for minority languages in a France destined to make its mark on Europe' (quoted in Temple 1994, 194). However, it is the development of a unified Europe and its supranational institutions that have provided the most significant continued support for regional and minority languages since the end of the Second World War.

In 1948, Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations, stated that humans should not be discriminated against on the grounds of language. The European Coal and Steel Community, which later developed into the European Union (henceforth EU), was created in 1950 and was composed of six member states: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. As it has developed and expanded, the acceptance of linguistic diversity has become a prerequisite for EU admission. The Copenhagen accession criteria, set out in 1993, assert that candidates must guarantee the human rights of its citizens and respect and protect its minorities in order to be able to become a member of the EU. The European Parliament has also acted to protect minority languages. As an example, it supported the establishment of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL) in 1982. However, it is the Council of Europe, founded in 1949, that is recognised as having had the most influence in supporting minority languages.

Adopted by the Council of Europe on 5 November 1992, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (henceforth the Charter) has emerged as

one of the most significant treaties concerning minorised languages to date. The aim of the Charter is to protect and promote historical regional or minority languages, excluding migrant languages and languages that are considered to be dialects of the official language of a given country. The act of categorising and nominating languages by states to be included in the legislation presents a level of ambiguity. In a country such as France, which has long adhered to a standard language ideology (Milroy 2001), state recognition of regional and minority languages is not a straightforward process (cf. section 4.2.1 for a discussion of standard language ideologies).

The treaty comprises five parts in total. The first part sets out the general provisions of the text. In Part II, the signatories agree to respect a number of fundamental principles and objectives of the Charter, whilst the third section contains sixty-eight undertakings in seven domains of which the candidates must commit to at least thirty-five. These are: education; judicial authorities; administrative authorities and public services; the media; cultural activities and facilities; economic and social life; and transfrontier exchanges. Part IV concerns the signatory state's application of the Charter and the final part deals with the technicalities of signing and ratification.

Sibille (2000, 93) likens the Charter to 'un menu à la carte', owing to the element of choice in the sections selected by the signatory states. Not only can the candidates select the articles to which it wishes to agree, but it can also decide on different criteria for the different languages it chooses to nominate. Judge and Judge regard this as a weakness of the Charter, as it could lead to further inequality (2000, 109). At the time of writing, twenty-five Council of Europe member states have signed and ratified the treaty, while another eight have only signed it. Ratification of the Charter is now a specified requirement for states wishing to join the EU.

The Charter posed many difficult questions for language policy-makers in France, whose Constitution places French as the only official language of the Republic. Under Lionel Jospin, the French government commissioned three reports on the subject. The first, originally investigated by Nicole Péry, but completed by Bernard Poignant, was submitted to the Prime Minister on 1 July 1998. In this report Poignant examined in depth French language policy, before providing his suggestions on how France should proceed regarding the Charter. The author of the report urged the government to re-assess its policy towards the RLs, and suggested that the threat to the hegemony of French lay elsewhere:

The promotion of a regional language does not signify the regression of the language spoken by everyone. French is well established, well anchored on the ground of the Republic. It is not threatened. Its problem is its global position, in international, and even European, situations, in the meetings of researchers, academic and artistic exchanges, industrial, commercial, and financial relations.¹⁸

This reiterates the fears highlighted by Etiemble in the 1960s, and the motivations behind the Bas-Lauriol and the subsequent Toubon laws; the principal threat to French was now English, not the RLs. He argues that the ratification of the Charter could be a positive move in French language status planning: ‘We like to fight for multilingualism worldwide, so that American English is not the linguistic master of the planet.’¹⁹ Wright (2000a, 415) highlights an ‘illogicality – if not hypocrisy’ in France refusing to ratify the Charter in spite of its declared stance to try to maintain international multilingualism. Poignant suggested that France should take three steps

¹⁸ ‘La promotion d’une langue régionale ne peut pas signifier la régression de la langue parlée par tous. Le français est bien installé, bien ancré sur le territoire de la République. Il n’est pas menacé. Son problème est sa place dans le monde, dans les instances internationales et même européennes, dans les rencontres des chercheurs, les échanges intellectuels et artistiques, les relations industrielles, commerciales et financières’ (Poignant, 1998).

¹⁹ ‘Nous aimons défendre le multilinguisme partout dans le monde, pour que l’anglo-américain ne soit pas le maître linguistique de la planète’ (Poignant, 1998).

regarding the Charter: first, it should assess the compatibility of its articles with the French Constitution, subsequently sign the Charter, and finally ratify it.

The government followed the first step and assigned Guy Carcassonne, a university professor of constitutional law, to carry out the report suggested by Poignant in July 1998. Carcassonne advised that France could sign fifty-two articles without any revisions to the Constitution. He emphasised that the focus of the Charter is on language rights and not an individual's rights, which is a far more complicated issue. For this reason, Grin (2003, 11) describes the Charter as 'an instrument of great originality and cunning design', which makes it difficult for states to find justified reasons not to sign. The main concern identified by Carcassonne's report was the choice of languages that should be nominated, which led to a further report by Bernard Cerquiglini, then the director of the National Institute of the French Language. His report, entitled 'Les Langues de France', was presented in April 1999, and identified seventy-five eligible languages. Judge and Judge (2000, 113) claim that Cerquiglini's report had a negative impact on the ratification process: 'By being a "good linguist", Cerquiglini, for a while and probably against his will, turned the whole subject into ridicule, at least as far as the press was concerned.' Conversely, it could be argued that this was a sign of recognition of the *de facto* multilingualism on French territory. The numbers of languages nominated in France's neighbouring countries were far more conservative (the United Kingdom ratified six languages; Germany seven languages; Spain three languages). However, it should be noted that the languages included in Cerquiglini's report also cover the *DOM-ROMs* (the French overseas departments and regions), as well as metropolitan France.

France eventually signed the Charter on 7 May 1999, but is yet to complete the third step suggested by Poignant: ratification. In spite of the positive outcomes of the government reports, in June 1999 the Constitutional Council raised further concerns about the congruence of the Charter and Article 2 of the Constitution, ‘la langue de la République est le français’. Poignant (1999, 49) explains that ‘[s]igning and ratifying the Council of Europe charter would mean taking the plunge. In doing so, France would be showing confidence in the future. It would be a wonderful gift for the twenty-first century’. At the current time, there is no sign that France will ratify the Charter in the immediate future; its ratification would signal a significant change in post-revolutionary language policy. Nevertheless, Oakes (2011b, 77) argues that the discussions on the Charter ‘have contributed to the broader debate of how to modernise traditional understandings of France’s republican values’. As a result, the French myth of ‘one state, one nation, one language’ has been challenged in the public arena, which has raised the profile of the many languages spoken in France.

2.3.14 2008: The Constitutional Recognition of the RLs

Sixteen years after the French language was enshrined in Article 2 of the French Constitution, in 2008 Article 75-1 was amended to read: ‘The regional languages belong to the heritage of France.’²⁰ Oakes explains that this amendment was implemented only after a number of proposals and debates by politicians and the rejection to include such a statement in Article 1 of the Constitution by the Académie française and subsequently the Senate (2011b, 74–77). The amendment represents a small but significant declaration of recognition and support for the RLs, although the

²⁰ ‘Article 75-1 : Les langues régionales appartiennent au patrimoine de la France’ (French Constitution of 4 October 1954).

actual languages are not specified, the use of which has been discouraged by the French State since the Revolution. The statement indicates that the RLs are valued by the State; Nolan (2010, 9) argues that '[t]his event shows that activism in favour of regional languages continues, and is growing in strength'. However, in a more prominent section of the Constitution, alongside powerful symbols of France, the French language remains clearly positioned as *the* language of the Republic.

2.4 Conclusion

Ager (1999) suggests three motivations for language policy in France: insecurity, identity and image. He explains these as: 'fear of the other; pride in the unique identity of the French nation-state; and a mission to spread the benefits of Frenchness world-wide' (1999, x). The 'fear of the other' motivation has manifested itself in language planning efforts to privilege French over Latin, the RLs, migrant languages and English. The 1992 amendment to Article 2 of the Constitution suggested that the State felt a level of insecurity regarding the dominance of the national language at the close of the twentieth century. 'Pride in the unique identity of the French nation-state' was founded at the time of the Revolution. Finally, the 'mission to spread the benefits of Frenchness world-wide' started in the period of colonialism, continued with the establishment of the Alliance française at the end of the nineteenth century and was boosted in the twentieth century by French support of the OIF.

However, France is not the only western European state to have a long history of privileging one dominant language over any other spoken on its territory. The creation of the Académie française was preceded by that of the Italian Accademia della Crusca in 1582, and followed by the Real Academia Española in Spain in 1713. The Alliance française, founded in 1883, was the first status planning

organisation of its kind, but it was followed closely by the Società Dante Alighieri established in 1889, the Deutsche Akademie in 1925 (later renamed the Goethe Institut) and the British Council in 1934. However, Adamson (2007, 92) suggests that French language policy has been particularly severe towards other languages: ‘Whereas in Germany, Italy and Spain the repression of regional and minority languages is associated with relatively short-lived fascist regimes, in France this repression has been enshrined in governments since the Revolution.’ French language policy-makers managed to make their quest for monolingualism a widely-accepted long-term goal of the French Republic.

In 2004, the French writer and member of the Académie française, Maurice Druon, in a manifesto for French to be employed as the legal reference language in the EU, stated that ‘[t]he French language, like Latin before, offers, through its vocabulary, syntax and grammar, the best guarantees of clarity and accuracy, and ultimately reduces risks of diverging interpretations’ (translated in Adrey 2009, 132). Adrey (2009, 132) comments that ‘this text singularly departs from the logic of multilingualism to which France had allegedly been committed during the 1990s’. It is clear from Druon’s statement that the strong bias towards the supremacy of the French language exists still amongst certain sections of French society.

Ager (1999, 41) claims that: ‘French policy towards regional languages has been largely successful in its aim of destroying regional identities and separate cultural traditions because of its fear of them.’ Judge (2007, 23) agrees: ‘by the 1930s only one person in four still spoke a RL, by the 1950s this figure had dropped to one in ten, by the 1970s to one in twenty and by the 1980s to one in over thirty.’ In contrast, Spolsky regards the survival of the RLs as a sign that French monolingual language policy has failed ultimately. He ventures that ‘[t]wo hundred years of active

language management should surely have been enough to destroy them completely’ (2004, 74). However, French language policy has succeeded in downgrading their status to languages that are, on the whole, now rarely transmitted intergenerationally. Adrey (2009, 139) highlights the contradictory nature of the post-Revolution behaviour of the French Republic:

Any admission of divergence/difference, or of the divisibility of the French nation (to put it in the dominant republican metaphor), is a denial of the *République*’s very legitimacy *as opposed to* exclusive ‘ethnic’ systems. Republicanism, therefore, reproduces the very exclusiveness and intolerance it claims to oppose. (Original emphasis)

Over two centuries after the Revolution, the Jacobin ideology of the *République* is still prominent. Commenting on the future of language policy in France, Ager (1999, 222) states that:

Language policy is likely to remain at the centre of French concerns. For the Left, it will be described as even more Republican, Revolutionary in origin and supportive of human rights. For the Right, the same policy may be described as French, pure and solidly based in defending the identity and the true nature of France. The discourses may be different, but the intention is the same: to ensure continued close interaction in language between the political, the cultural and the truly French.

Therefore, language policy will persist in occupying a principal role in the makeup of the French Republic, over two centuries after the Revolution that placed it high on the political agenda.

Adamson (2007, 174) advises that French language policy needs to be re-thought in a twenty-first-century context in order to maintain its position: ‘As long as it can respond with flexibility and creativity to the changing needs of its speakers, it will not die.’ With the intervention of supranational bodies such as the Council of Europe, the acceptance of regional or minority languages is no longer optional. In

order for the RLs to regain some of their status, French language policy will need to exhibit the greater flexibility and creativity suggested by Adamson. Poignant (2000, 27) contends that ‘[t]he France that we love is republican without being Jacobin, decentralised without renouncing the State, European without abandoning the nation, multilingual but primarily French-speaking.’²¹ In the following chapters there will be a closer examination of whether, and how, French language-in-education policy is attempting to strike this balance.

²¹ ‘La France que nous aimons est républicaine sans être jacobine, décentralisée sans renoncer à l’Etat, européenne sans abandonner la nation, plurilingue mais d’abord francophone’ (Poignant 2000, 27).

Chapter 3: A historical sociolinguistic overview of Alsace

3.1 Introduction

Following a presentation of the methodological grounding of this thesis and the development of French language policy in chapter two, this chapter will present a historical sociolinguistic overview of the region of Alsace. The events examined will be presented principally in a chronological order, to chart the development of language management, language practices and language attitudes in Alsace, from the fourth century to the present day. At certain points in the chapter it will be necessary to deviate from the chronological order to examine a particular theme over a long-ranging period of time. The aim of this chapter is to consider carefully the specific sociolinguistic context of the region, before moving on to an in-depth analysis of contemporary language-in-education policy in Alsace, with a particular focus on RL bilingual primary education, in chapter five.

A 'naturally defined region' (Lodge 1993, 61), bordered by the Vosges Mountains to the west, and the River Rhine to the east, Alsace finds itself situated between modern-day France and Germany (Figure 7). There is also a shared land border with northern, German-speaking Switzerland to the south of the region. Although the smallest region of metropolitan France in terms of surface area, today Alsace is the third most densely populated French region, with a population of over 1.8 million inhabitants (INSEE 2010, 2). Alsace is often linked with the Lorraine region, owing to a number of shared events in their histories. However, only the region of Alsace will be studied in detail in this thesis. Alsace is divided into two administrative *départements*; the Bas-Rhin and the Haut-Rhin (Figure 8). Poised between France and Germany, historic enemies, Alsace has been the scene, and the resulting reward, of many violent clashes.

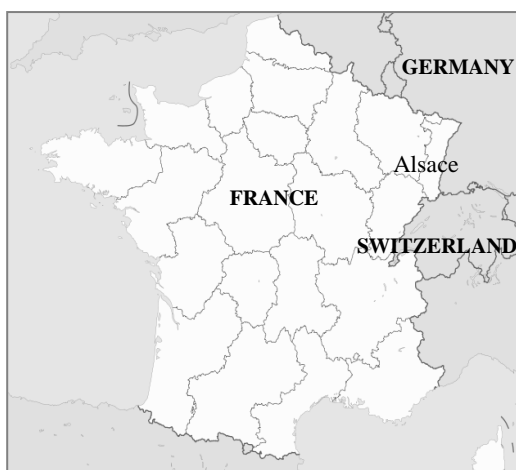


Figure 7:
Map of modern-day Alsace and
neighbouring countries



Figure 8:
Map of Alsace administrative *départements*,
their capitals and neighbouring French regions

Alsace is not the only region of France to have previously been the possession of other modern-day neighbouring states. However, few other French regions have experienced the same degree of unrest as has Alsace over a prolonged period of time. Nolan (2010, 86) notes that the Strasbourg Oaths, signed in 842, ‘mark the beginning of 1,103 years of almost continual conflict until the 9 of May 1945, in which Strasbourg and the regions around it would be a particular source of contestation’. Political control of the region having changed hands between France and Germany five times since the seventeenth century, Adamson (2007, 94) has christened Alsace: ‘the political football of Western Europe in the last 150 years.’ It is the aim of this chapter to chart the sociolinguistic development of the region whose inhabitants Kretz (1995, 105) describes as ‘either the most Latin of Germans, or the most German of Latins’, depending on the period of history considered.²²

²² ‘Les aléas de l’histoire ont placé alternativement notre province en haut à droite ou en bas à gauche des cartes nationales, faisant de ses habitants soit les plus latins des Germains, soit les plus germanes des Latins’ (Kretz 1995, 105).

3.2 The Establishment of Germanic Peoples in Alsace

Following in the footsteps of the Celts and the Romans, the Alamans—a Germanic tribe—arrived in large numbers in Alsace at the beginning of the fifth century.

Another Germanic tribe, the Franks, settled in Alsace later in the century in the far north and north-west of the region. The language of the Alamans, Alemannic (in French *l'alémanique*, or in German *Alemannisch*) was spoken in the central and southern parts of Alsace whilst Franconian (*le francique/Frankisch*), the language of the Franks, was spoken in the northern area, and the neighbouring Moselle area of Lorraine. Alemannic and Franconian form part of a Germanic dialect continuum, with the former extending into the German state of Baden-Württemberg and northern Switzerland, and the latter through the German Saarland and Rhineland, as well as Luxembourg (Judge 2007, 86). Over time, the Frankish and Alemannic language varieties spoken in Alsace have to some extent converged; there has been an increase in similarity between them, leading to greater mutual intelligibility (Bothorel-Witz and Huck 2003, 24). Whilst there remains some degree of variation, in particular if one compares two speakers from opposite ends of the region, for the purposes of this study all of the varieties are treated as one linguistic entity, and referred to as Alsatian. The challenges presented by variation in formal language acquisition, for example in the school domain, will be discussed in chapter four.

Judge (2007, 86) notes that whereas the Germanic peoples who settled in other areas of France switched to the pre-existing local speech forms, in Alsace the Alemannic and Frankish language varieties replaced Latin, with the exception of several small areas in the west of the region, along the Vosges. The close proximity of other Germanic-speaking peoples on the other side of the Rhine to the east can be highlighted as a reason why the Alamans and the Franks retained their languages in

this region. Nevertheless, for several centuries after their arrival Latin remained the principal language of writing, and retained an elite status.

Standard German (*Hochdeutsch* in German) emerged in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, as a constructed written language designed to act as a means of communication between the different Germanic-speaking political centres of the German Holy Roman Empire (Huck *et al* 1999, 17). For centuries standard German existed only as a written language; in Alsace traditionally it has not been spoken in everyday life. The publications of Martin Luther's translation of the New Testament (1522) and later the entire Bible (1534) are recognised as key events in the widespread diffusion of standard German (Mattheier 2003, 220). Hughes (1992, 38) claims that: 'Without this, the political fragmentation of Germany might have led to the development of two or more mutually incomprehensible languages in north and south, as was to happen in the case of Dutch and German.' The acceptance of standard German as the written variant of Alsatian has meant that this RL variety has not been elaborated and codified, as German came to assume the role of the H language in a diglossic relationship with Alsatian. As a result, this limited both the use and the social prestige of Alsatian. Nevertheless, in spite of the absence of extensive corpus planning Alsatian can, and has been, written. Hartweg (1988, 35) describes the sixteenth century as a golden age for Alsatian literature, and many printing houses were established in Alsace. However, as standard German was emerging as a language of much wider communication, which motivated both writers and publishers to adopt it, Alsatian literature did not continue to thrive in the same manner. By the mid-seventeenth century the oral language of the majority of Alsace inhabitants was Alsatian; Latin continued to exist as a language of the Catholic

Church and as a scholarly language, but standard German had established itself as the language of written expression in the region.

3.3 Alsace, a Region of France

Following the end of the Thirty Years' War (1618–48), France gradually gained political control of Alsace, beginning with the areas that had belonged to Austria, and acquiring Strasbourg in 1681 (the city of Mulhouse, situated in the Haut-Rhin, remained a member of the Swiss Confederation until 1798). Although a 1685 ruling imposed French as the language of official acts (Ager 1996, 41), the use of German was also permitted in Alsace under the *Ancien Régime* and it continued to be used in administration, middle and low justice, religion, the theatre and the press (Hartweg 1988, 35). Henceforth both French and German held the position of H languages in a triglossic situation, although there was little social stigma attached to the use of Alsatian at this time. A similar triglossic relationship between French, Tuscan Italian and Corsican emerged on Corsica in the eighteenth century, although the presence of Tuscan Italian soon became less prevalent, leaving a diglossia between French as the H language and Corsican as the L language (Blackwood 2008, 18).

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed a period of expansion in France, as the country gained power over a number of new territories, including Flanders and Roussillon (1659), Franche-Comté (1668), Lorraine (1738) and Corsica (1768), as well as a number of overseas territories with the growth of the French Empire. Language policy was not a major concern for the rulers of France at the time; French was only employed by those who needed or wished to communicate with the King. For the vast majority of the population of Alsace, language management and language practices continued in the same manner as they had

before 1648, which meant speaking Alsatian and, for those who could, reading and writing mostly in German. Nevertheless, the association of French with the powerful ruling classes can be seen as a catalyst for a change in language attitudes. However, it should be noted that French was the language of many elites throughout Europe, including that of Alsace's former ruler, and now neighbour, Germany. Much in the same way that French had become the language of many elites throughout Europe, the masses in France felt little desire or obligation to adopt the language themselves.

3.3.1 The French Revolution: The Beginnings of a Linguistic Revolution in Alsace

As highlighted above (cf. section 2.3.3), the French Revolution acted as a major turning point in the development of French language policy. The revolutionaries supported the ideology that one could only be a true citizen of France only through the knowledge and use of the French language (Yman-via-Yish). Top-down language management strategies were adopted to alter significantly French language ideologies and practices. Use of the RLs was explicitly discouraged in an unprecedented manner; the German language, perceived as the RL of Alsace, was linked to emigration and hatred of the Republic (Sibille 2000, 18; cf. section 2.3.3). In contrast, of French Barère de Vieuzac pronounced: 'We owe it to our citizens, we owe it to the strengthening of the Republic, to impose throughout all of its territory the language in which is written the Declaration of Human Rights' (translated from Wardhaugh 1987, 102).²³ This exemplifies the 'ideology, myths, propaganda, coercion' mechanism described by Shohamy to turn ideology into practice (2006, 58) (cf. section 2.3.3); the revolutionaries suggested that cultural enlightenment could only be achieved via the medium of the French language.

²³ 'Pour nous, nous devons, à nos citoyens, nous devons à l'affermissement de la République, de faire parler sur tout son territoire la langue dans laquelle est écrite la Déclaration des droits de l'homme' (Barère de Vieuzac quoted in Wardhaugh 1987, 102).

As France was involved in an increasing number of military conquests at the beginning of the nineteenth century, language policy, in particular language-in-education policy, took on a less imperative role (Wardhaugh 1987, 103; Lodge 1993, 217). Education had been recognised by the revolutionaries as an important language policy mechanism, which was illustrated by the 1794 *Décret du 8 pluviôse An II* that asserted that within ten days a French teacher should be installed in every parish in the departments where Breton, Italian (Corsican), Basque and German (Alsatian) were spoken. However, the development of free, compulsory French language schooling was, as Lodge (1993, 216) notes, ‘painfully slow’. In order to fulfil the Republic’s acquisition planning ambitions, the training of a large number of French-speaking teachers would be required. Lodge (1993, 217) concludes that ‘while the French state may have willed the linguistic assimilation of the provinces, it was not prepared to dig deep into its pockets to bring it about’. Owing to the delay in enforcing education as an effective language policy mechanism, in the early nineteenth century most Alsatian children had little or no knowledge of the French language. Grasser (1998, 59) states that the Revolution was welcomed enthusiastically in Alsace, and that by 1815 the region’s inhabitants considered themselves to be truly French, although linguistic assimilation had not yet been achieved. In spite of the revolutionaries’ efforts to stigmatise the use of the RL, Alsatian remained the language of most homes, while standard German was mainly the written language and the language used in church. Nevertheless, the Revolution cemented French as the language of the elite and those who aspired to improve their social status.

The 1833 Guizot law did establish schools for boys in each parish of over five hundred inhabitants; however, attendance at the schools was not free, nor

compulsory (Judge 2007, 87). The Falloux law, passed in 1850, extended the offer of education to girls in parishes of over eight hundred inhabitants (Grew and Harrigan 1991, 122). In Alsace, at first both German and French were employed in teaching; however, Grasser (1998, 80) states that the amount of French increased during the nineteenth century, as a higher number of French-speaking teachers became available who had been trained in the teacher training colleges (*écoles normales*) established after the Revolution. Huck *et al* (2007, 22) highlight the year 1850 as a turning point in the progress of French as the written language in Alsace, since it began to replace German in official domains. Furthermore, whereas standard German was beginning to be used as a means of oral expression in Germany, this was not achieved in Alsace. Therefore, although French was far from succeeding in establishing itself as the language of everyday life, the social function of standard German was limited (Huck *et al* 2007, 22).

Fischer (2010, 12) claims that class divides dictated the languages practised, as well as nations favoured, by Alsatians as the 1648–1871 period of French rule came to its end:

On the eve of the war of 1870–1871, the upper classes spoke French, mimicked Parisian trends, and looked to Paris as their national capital; the lower classes spoke German, or the Alsatian regional dialect thereof, and had a more tenuous relationship with France.

Within a century of the Revolution, language had become a clear marker of one's social status, with French being associated with the upwardly mobile, while the RLs were linked with cultural and economic stagnation. The effect of such negative language ideologies towards the RLs would have an impact on language practices, contributing to an eventual language shift towards French.

3.3.2 The Impact of the Industrial Revolution

If the French Revolution had sparked the beginning of a transformation in language management and language ideologies in France, the nineteenth-century Industrial Revolution engendered a greater transformation of nationwide language practices. As a result of the development of the nationwide railway network, the population was becoming increasingly mobile and started to look beyond local areas for work, meaning that speakers were more often removed from the practice of their RLs. Fishman (1991, 58) describes the impact on language practices of moving from a rural to an urban setting:

Urbanization of hitherto rural newcomers involves interacting with strangers at almost every step; in the neighbourhood, at work, at school, in shopping, in transportation, in entertainment and at civic functions, on the one hand; and a greatly increased density of communication, on the other hand.

Thus individuals become more likely to switch to the lingua franca, which then becomes a means of communication that can also extend to use in private domains.

Lodge (1993, 223) notes that the increasingly industrialised nature of employment also had an effect on language practices:

Techniques and knowledge traditionally handed down orally from one generation to the next were gradually superseded by technologically more advanced methods transmitted essentially through writing. The old oral culture gave way to a culture dominated by the written word.

Literacy figures increased dramatically in the nineteenth century, with approximately 95% of the population being literate by 1906 (Lodge 1993, 224). The written word became the most valued form of language, whereas Lodge (1993, 225) argues that '[i]lliteracy became synonymous with barbarism'. As the RLs were perceived principally as oral languages, and French had enjoyed a long history of corpus

planning (cf. section 2.3.2), French, as the more developed written language, was held in the highest esteem.

3.4 1871: The Return of Alsace to the Control of a Newly Unified Germany

Following French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, Alsace-Lorraine became a *Reichsland* of Germany by the Treaty of Frankfurt in 1871 as ‘a prize of war’ (Fischer 2010, 12). The return of Alsace to Germany coincided with the unification of the German state in 1871, which previously had existed as a ‘diverse and politically fragmented collection of states, independent cities and semi-sovereign territories’ (Sheehan 1992, 49). Green (2001, 6) contends that ‘German victory in the Franco-Prussian War acted as a national catharsis, paving the way for German unification in 1871 and providing a basis for national identity in the new German Empire’. The return of Alsace to German control sparked the departure of thousands of inhabitants of Alsace to France by October 1872, who in turn were replaced by new arrivals from the rest of Germany (Vogler 1994, 303–04).

Wright (2000b and 2004) highlights that use of the standard German language had been highlighted as a means to cement the nation in nineteenth-century Germany. German Romantic philosophers, such as Herder, Fichte and von Humboldt, believed that language was an essential feature to bind a nation (Oakes 2001, 22). Moreover, in contrast to the ideologies of the French revolutionaries, who believed that the nation-state should be based on equality and popular sovereignty (May 2001, 58), the German Romantics held the view that language was a defining characteristic of what constituted a nation (May 2001, 57). In 1871 efforts were quickly made to re-germanicise Alsace and Lorraine linguistically. As the sole official language, German was imposed as the language of administration, and the

functionality of the language that had been lost in the decades leading up to 1871 was restored. The over-zealous nature of the German state to ensure the de-gallicisation of its new *Reichsland* is illustrated by Vogler (1994, 308): ‘If throughout all of the Empire one can be called Louis and Marie, in Alsace-Lorraine, alone, one must be called Ludwig and Maria.’²⁴ Furthermore, street names and toponyms were germanicised, which exemplifies the ‘language in the public space’ language policy mechanism proposed by Shohamy (2008, 58).

As the Ferry laws were set to impose French language education in France (cf. section 2.3.4), free, obligatory, standard German language education was introduced in Alsace in the 1870s (Vogler 1994, 310). Although the French language was initially permitted to be taught for a few hours a week, in 1873 this was stopped (Grasser 1998, 84). Henceforth Alsace-Lorraine was treated in the same way as any other German *Reichsland*, and Alsatians who had predominantly been existing as Ymen-via-Xish with a growing awareness and use of Yish, were expected to become Germans-via-German only (Vogler 1994, 305). In those areas of Alsace that had not traditionally been germanophone, the use of French was tolerated (Vogler 1994, 310).

Fischer (2010, 14) explains that the linguistic and social divides that existed before 1871 endured after this time, as the Francophile upper classes had the means to send their children to French universities and finishing schools, and maintain links with their acquaintances across the border. The mainly Alsatian-speaking working classes did not have the same opportunities available to them, and thus the progress, albeit limited, that the French language had achieved in the two centuries previous was largely undone (Fischer 2010, 14).

²⁴ ‘Si dans l’Empire tout entier on peut s’appeler Louis et Marie, en Alsace-Lorraine, seule, il faut se nommer Ludwig et Maria’ (Vogler 1994, 308).

3.4.1 Alsatian Regionalism

Fischer (2010, 3) defines regionalism in general as ‘a movement that seeks to promote the political, social, economic, and/or cultural interests in a particular region’. He describes regionalism in Alsace as ‘multilayered, evolving, contingent, and contested’ (2010, 3); this is perhaps unsurprising, first due to its peripheral geographical location, whether under French or German rule, and second due to the dramatic political changes in the region’s history. Following over two centuries of French rule, assimilation into German society after 1871 was not a straightforward process. Ager (1990, 51) suggests that ‘Alsace felt neither fully French nor completely German’. Owing to the binary nature of the region’s loyalties, Fischer (2010, 2) argues that Alsatian regionalism ‘took on a Janus-faced character’. He explains that the aggressive policies of gallicisation and subsequent de-gallicisation applied had a negative impact on Alsations:

Germany and France in turn sought to win over the loyalty of the region’s inhabitants and in the process quite often alienated the local population. Fate, therefore, dictated that Alsatian culture in part be defined relationally to France and Germany. Therefore, regionalism could serve as a manner of protesting French and German policies, or of resisting nationalist pressures to assimilate.

In spite of prescribed official languages, whose use is unavoidable in certain settings, one’s personal loyalties influence bottom-up language attitudes, and language practices in domains where the individual has more influence, for example in the home. In a situation where a speaker has access to more than one language variety, the language chosen holds a symbolic power, whether the speaker makes the choice implicitly or explicitly. The Alsatian regional autonomous movement peaked in the late 1920s. The lack of a sustained collective movement can be explained by the split loyalties and political interests in the region, whereby one section of the population

was drawn towards France and the other towards Germany. Alsatian regionalism was not specifically linked with separatism or violent protest, as has been the case in some of the other French RL-speaking areas, but rather with devolution of power away from the centre and the acknowledgement of the specific nature of the region.

In the post-Second World War period, the French imprisoned autonomists as they sought to consolidate the nation (Ager 1990, 51) and there was a shift from regionalism to assimilation. In the 1995 national elections almost one quarter of the Alsatian electorate voted for the extreme right-wing political party, le Front National, compared to the national vote of 15% (*Libération* 2012), which provoked widespread debate on regional culture in Alsace. Adamson (2007, 94) notes the existence of a number of regionalist political groups currently present in Alsace, namely the Union du Peuple Alsacien, Alsace d'abord, Le Front National de Libération d'Alsace and the Mouvement Régionaliste Alsacien. She comments (2007, 96) on the possible effect that language shift away from the RLs can have on regionalist movements: 'As the regional languages weaken throughout Europe and the likelihood of saving them diminishes, there is an almost parallel increase in political activity, often of an unreasoning and extreme kind.' Although Adamson suggests that language is not the main preoccupation of the right-wing group Alsace d'abord (2007, 96), she explains that the Charter that it proposes advocates RL bilingual education from the earliest years of primary school (2007, 97). The association of the RL with xenophobic right-wing politics could lead to negative language attitudes towards both Alsatian and German.

3.5 The First World War

The outbreak of the First World War caused great upheaval in Alsace, and inhabitants who had remained loyal to France since 1871 fled Alsace to join friends and relatives over the border, or to serve in the French army (Fischer 2010, 101). Whilst 250,000 Alsatians were conscripted into the German army, over 20,000 volunteered to fight in the French army (Wardhaugh 1987, 111). The French state's desire to impose the national language did not diminish even in the midst of the war as Alsatian soldiers in the French army, in addition to Alsatian prisoners of war, were offered French language classes. Fischer (2010, 105) explains:

Alsatians would remember their time in French hands fondly and would have had French language training (with attention to patriotic French values thrown in for good measure), thereby allowing the soldiers to assimilate more easily into the French nation while simultaneously promoting the French nation among their fellow Alsatians.

Meanwhile in Alsace, the German government banned public use of French, which was once again the language of the national enemy (Fischer 2010, 107). As the war progressed, Alsatians in the German army were increasingly transferred from the western to the eastern front in order to discourage them from fleeing to join the opposing forces in France. Furthermore, from the spring of 1917 soldiers from the *Reichsland* of Alsace-Lorraine were no longer granted leave (Grasser 1998, 91–92). Echoing the effects of the Industrial Revolution on language practices and beliefs, the relocation of thousands of young men led them to adopt standard German or French which acted as *lingua francas*, depending on the side on which they fought. At the end of the war, even if they soon reverted to using Alsatian, the language of their families and friends, they had acquired the knowledge of the standard variety, the first step in a language shift. Furthermore, language beliefs towards the standard

languages improved, as soldiers witnessed first-hand their usefulness as a means of wider communication.

3.6 A Return to France

Following the end of the First World War, political control of Alsace was returned to France, by virtue of the 1919 Treaty of Versailles and French replaced German as the official language. As the linguistic landscape—that is the ‘linguistic objects that mark the public space’ (Gorter 2006, 3)—of the region had been transformed 1871, in the post-war years streets signs and town names were again gallicised. Blackwood (2008, 28) argues that the loss of Alsace and Lorraine in 1871 reaffirmed official beliefs that France definitively needed to be unified as a monolingual nation-state, and thus the linguistic assimilation of the regions that had been recovered became a key priority. The visual presence of French influenced language practices and beliefs in its favour as the language again became relevant in everyday life.

French once again became the sole official language in Alsace. As a part of their efforts to alter the region’s language policy, the French government posted civil servants from the rest of France to Alsace. As members of French civil service can be sent to any area of French territory, for Alsatians who wished to work as *fonctionnaires*, mastery of the French language was, and remains, essential, which has a strong impact on language practices and beliefs. The Ferry education laws, implemented in the rest of France almost forty years earlier, were finally put in place in Alsace. However, the policy of full immersion in French was soon replaced by bilingual French/German education. Ager suggests that there was a degree of tolerance in official attitudes towards France’s RLs in the interwar period: ‘Perhaps because they were no longer a real danger, perhaps in response to strengthening

autonomy movements in the 1920s in both Brittany and Alsace-Lorraine' (1996, 45).

However, Grasser (1998, 94) explains that the use of German was the result of necessity rather than will on the part of the French:

The “*direct method*”, consisting of full immersion in the French language, without the least mention of German, reveals a twofold problem: most Alsatian teachers do not master the French language and the young pupils, upon entering school, do not understand French.²⁵

This tolerance should not be regarded as an act of official acceptance, but rather of pragmatism; in order to complete a language shift from one monolingualism to another, a transitional period of bilingualism is necessary. As standard languages and the achievement of literacy are traditionally highly valued in education, the use of Alsatian was not officially permitted at school. The acceptance of the standard languages in a high-prestige language domain inevitably improved language beliefs towards these varieties, whilst the exclusion of Alsatian undermined its status.

In the interwar period Alsatian remained the most widely spoken language in informal settings, whilst German retained its role as the language of writing, and of education, although the aim of language-in-education policy-makers was ultimately the acquisition of French. The French language did make considerable progress during this time; a change in language practices is illustrated in a 1956 survey which suggests that in 1936 82% of the Alsace population could speak Alsatian, 76% German, and almost 56% French (Huck *et al* 2007, 25).

²⁵ ‘La « *méthode directe* », consistant à plonger les élèves dans un bain linguistique français, sans la moindre référence à l’allemand, soulève un double problème : la plupart des maîtres alsaciens ne maîtrisent pas la langue française et les jeunes élèves, à leur entrée à l’école, ne comprennent pas le français’ (Grasser 1998, 94).

3.6.1 The Exceptional Status of Religion in Alsace

As a region of Germany at the time of the 1905 French law of Separation of the Church and the State, when Alsace was returned to France following the end of the First World War, Alsatians were unwilling to accept this new legislation (Wardhaugh 1987, 112). Article 2 of the 1905 law declared that '[t]he Republic does not recognise, remunerate or subsidize any religion'.²⁶ Boyer (1993, 192) explains the attitude of the French State: 'It must be said that many French leaders, in 1918, hoped that Alsace and Moselle, after a period of adaptation, necessary but brief, would adopt the French legislation.'²⁷ However, the Alsatian population were unwilling to back down to French pressures. With regard to language, members of both the Catholic and Protestant church favoured German as the language of religious education (Philipps 1975, 206–07). Alsace and the Moselle *département* of Lorraine remain the only areas of modern-day France to permit religious education in the public school system (on an optional basis for parents), which is delivered through the medium of the French language. This determination to maintain the special status of their region with regard to religious policy indicates that, on certain issues, Alsatians are not willing to assimilate fully into the French Republic, of which one of the founding principles is secularity.

3.7 The Second World War: The Annexation of Alsace to Nazi Germany

Following the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939, a third of the population of Alsace was evacuated to regions in the south-west of France (Vogler 2003, 257). Vogler explains that the evacuees experienced a breakdown in

²⁶ 'Article 2 : La République ne reconnaît, ne salarie ni ne subventionne aucun culte' (Law of Separation of the Church and the State).

²⁷ 'Il faut dire que beaucoup de dirigeants français, en 1918, espéraient que l'Alsace et Moselle, après une période d'adaptation, nécessaire mais brève, adopteraient la législation française' (Boyer 1993, 192).

communication with other Frenchmen, in particular older Alsatians who had been born after 1871 and who had had minimal contact with the French language since France had regained control of the region after the First World War (2003, 257). Their Alsatian mother tongue acted as a hindrance to their settling in a new region. Furthermore, many Frenchmen who were not familiar with the Alsatian RL believed that the language they were speaking was German, the language of France's adversary. As well as a shift in language practices owing to greater contact with the French language, it can be contended that the language beliefs of the evacuees were influenced in favour of the French language.

Alsace was annexed by Germany from June 1940 until March 1945. The Nazi party aimed to re-germanicise the region as quickly as possible; inhabitants of those areas of Alsace that were not traditionally German-speaking were given documentation stating that they were permitted to use French, and providing they could show this documentation to officials at any given time, they would not be punished (Philipps 1975, 230). The use of French, which had been the official language of the region, was banned in the rest of Alsace, as it represented the language of the enemy. This exemplifies the symbolic meaning that is attached to language in society; the Third Reich perceived speaking Xish as being a marker of being, or wishing to be, an Xman. Throughout the region, posters were put up by the Nazi party bearing the slogan 'Alsations, speak your German mother tongue!' (Philipps 1975, 229).²⁸ As in the post-1871 period, efforts to germanicise Alsace were vigorous; Vassberg (1993, 20) notes that: 'Even the greetings *bonjour*, *au revoir*, and *adieu*, all of which had long since been borrowed into Alsatian, could no longer be used'; the use of French could result in a fine, imprisonment, or being sent

²⁸ 'Elsässer, spreche Eure deutsche Muttersprache!' (Philipps 1975, 229).

to Schirmeck, the concentration camp situated in the Bas-Rhin *département*. Using language as a symbol, Alsatian resistance groups employed French both publicly and privately as an act of opposition to the Nazi regime. Having been caught singing *La Marseillaise* (the French national anthem written by Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle whilst stationed in Strasbourg in 1792), one hundred and six young Alsatians were deported to Schirmeck (Meyer 2008, 382–83). French monuments were demolished, French books were burned, and the wearing of a beret, perceived as a symbol of French culture, was prohibited. Any person with a French Christian name was requested either to adopt a German equivalent or to change names; surnames, business names, street and town names were also germanicised, an example of the ‘language in the public space’ language policy mechanism (Shohamy 2006, 68). Vassberg (1993, 21) compares the language ideology of the Third Reich to that supported by France at the time of the Revolution; linguistic unity was the key to national unity, hence standard German should be employed over all other languages. The Third Reich sought to eliminate any regional characteristics, including the use of Alsatian. Philipps (1975, 237) comments: ‘The Alsatian idiosyncrasy, even the notion of the Alsatian homeland, none of that counted. The Nazi rulers even found it dangerous.’²⁹

Employees in the public sector were forced to sign a form pledging their allegiance to the Third Reich if they wanted to retain their jobs. Teachers who were deemed incapable of teaching pupils in German were sent to neighbouring regions for retraining. In return, teachers from other areas of Germany were sent to Alsace to ensure that Alsatian pupils were taught in the language deemed most important by the government: standard German.

²⁹ ‘Le particularisme alsacien, la notion même de *elsässische Heimat*, tout cela ne comptait pas. Les maîtres nazis trouvaient cela même dangereux’ (Philipps 1975, 237).

As the war progressed, the Nazi regime became an increasingly oppressive force in the day to day life of Alsatians as military conscription was introduced and young people were made to join the Hitler Youth. Kretz (1995, 45–46) highlights the effect that the rhetoric used by the Nazi party had on perceptions towards the German language in Alsace:

Although nowhere was it the language of everyday life, German was a friendly language, which helped one to be closer to God and to withstand life better. And then suddenly, in 1940, this language was no longer spoken but bellowed by the invaders. The “*Vater unser...*” (the Our Father) was replaced by “*Juden raus*” (Jews out), “*Mensch ärgere dich nicht*” (don’t get angry) by “*Raus mit dem welschen Plunder*” (out with the French rubbish).³⁰

Ultimately, the Second World War was an important turning point for language attitudes in Alsace, more effective than any language policy mechanism previously employed by the French government. Philipps (1975, 249) explains: ‘The territory of Alsace, bruised by the double-edged sword and blood, was now malleable enough for ‘the linguistic unity of the nation’ to be able to be completed, without the least bit of resistance’.³¹ The traditional means of oral expression, Alsatian, and its widely accepted written expression, standard German, were now extremely vulnerable to language shift towards French as France, as the Second World War victors, regained definitive control of Alsace.

³⁰ ‘Bien que n’étant nulle part langue de quotidienneté, l’allemand était une langue conviviale qui aidait à rencontrer Dieu et à mieux supporter la vie. Et voilà que soudain, en 1940, cette langue n’est plus parlée mais beuglée par les envahisseurs. Le «*Vater unser...*» (le Notre Père) était remplacé par «*Juden raus...*» (les juifs dehors), «*Mensch ärgere dich nicht*» (ne te fâches pas) par «*Raus mit dem welschen Plunder*» (dehors le fatras français)’ (Kretz 1995, 45–6).

³¹ ‘La terre d’Alsace, meurtrie par le glaive et le sang, était maintenant assez malléable pour que pût être parachevée, sans la moindre résistance, « l’unité linguistique de la nation. »’ (Philipps 1975, 249).

3.8 Post-1945: Alsace, Region of France

After 1945, for the third time in three centuries, French was imposed as the sole official language of Alsace. Propaganda posters stating ‘Il est chic de parler français’ (‘It is chic to speak French’) soon replaced the ‘Elsässer, spreche Eure deutsche Muttersprache!’ posters displayed by the Nazi party. Alsatians were eager to comply with the French Republic and to disassociate themselves from Germany. Vogler (1994, 450) notes that: ‘During the first years the learning of French is regarded as an act of contrition and conceived of as a badge of citizenship to erase the original sin.’³² Unlike during the period between the World Wars, Alsatians were reluctant to request special language concessions. Grasser (1998, 112) explains that in the immediate post-war years ‘nobody dared to plead the case of bilingualism: German is the language of the enemy and war criminals; even the dialect is linked with guilt: it is because of it that Alsatians are perceived as Germans throughout the Occupation’.³³ Judge (2007, 89) concludes: ‘Only those who saw Alsatian as separate from German could remain faithful to it.’ She notes that as Alsatian was often referred to as *le dialecte*, in distinction to *l’allemand*, psychologically this may have helped its speakers to separate it from the German language, which had been tainted, and aided the survival of the language variety. Judge (2007, 87) contends that many Alsatians ‘traumatised by these changes, took refuge in their RLs, which survived, until quite recently, far better than others’. However, use of Alsatian slowly but steadily began to decrease as French imposed itself in all domains, first in the urban settings of Strasbourg, Colmar and Mulhouse, and then in smaller towns and

³² ‘L’apprentissage du français est durant les premières années perçu comme un acte de contrition et conçu comme un brevet de citoyenneté pour effacer le péché original’ (Vogler 1994, 450).

³³ ‘Personne ne songe alors à plaider la cause du bilinguisme: l’allemand est la langue de l’ennemi et des criminels de guerre; même le dialecte est culpabilisé : c’est à cause de lui que les Alsaciens ont été considérés comme Allemands pendant l’Occupation’ (Grasser 1998, 112).

villages. The replacement of Alsatian as the language of the home marked an important milestone in the language shift towards French.

Klein (2007, 71) describes Alsatians as both ‘victims’ and ‘accomplices’ in the decline of their RL:

Victims, because France was going to apply a policy of linguistic standardisation in Alsace that it had tried out and succeeded in implementing elsewhere. Accomplices, because henceforth it would not be easy to proclaim any kind of German characteristic, above all not linguistic.³⁴

Considering the effect of the war on the identity of the region, alongside government language management strategies which sought to establish French as the language in every domain by every section of French society, it is difficult (if not senseless) to attribute blame to the post-war generation for the language shift away from the RL, as the label ‘accomplices’ suggests.

As the linguistic balance began to transform, French assumed the role of the H language in a diglossia with Alsatian as the L language. However, as knowledge of French spread, code-switching became a more regular occurrence and the diglossia became increasingly leaky, as French also began to be used more widely in the L domains. As standard French thrived, the functionality of standard German declined dramatically. Wardhaugh (1987, 112) notes that: ‘It was estimated in 1964 that although 80 per cent of Alsatians could speak one of the Alsatian dialects, few could either read or write standard German.’ Therefore, within two decades of the end of the Second World War, the position of the German language had been significantly marginalised in Alsace.

³⁴ ‘Victimes, parce que la France va appliquer en Alsace une politique d’uniformisation linguistique qu’elle avait expérimentée et réussie ailleurs. Complices, parce qu’il ne sera pas facile alors de se revendiquer d’un quelconque caractère allemand, surtout pas linguistique’ (Klein 2007, 71).

3.8.1 Language-in-Education Policy in Alsace

After 1945 the French authorities banned the German language in education in Alsace, for the first time in the region's history. The use of Alsatian was prohibited, and a pupil would be punished if heard speaking it. Walter (1999, 16) explains the reaction to RL use in the French classroom in the early part of the twentieth century, which reflects the language ideology supported by the education system:

Older people today bitterly recall some of their unpleasant school classes when the first child who let a *patois* word slip was instantly given a card featuring a cow or another animal, or a filthy shoe, or any object intended to stand as a symbol of shame.

The psychological impact of such an episode would alter bottom-up language policies; individuals would begin to identify the use of their mother tongue with public humiliation. As a result, they would be reluctant to practise this language, and to pass it on to their own children, in favour of a more socially acceptable speech form.

The 1951 Deixonne law concerning the teaching of the France's RLs did not recognise Alsatian in its legislation as it was perceived to be a variant of a foreign language (cf. section 2.3.7), but in 1952 German was reintroduced in the two final years of primary education in recognised Alsatian-speaking areas. Nolan (2010, 111) suggests that Alsatian was not allowed to be used in the classroom, as 'it may have been feared that the teaching of Alsatian German might encourage an autonomist resurgence in Alsace such as that which occurred between the World Wars'. The majority of Alsatian parents accepted this policy without objection, as they wished to be seen as loyal citizens of France. Furthermore, Alsatian, primarily perceived as the language of the home, had not traditionally been associated with education.

Bothorel-Witz and Huck (2003, 38) describe the initial reintroduction of German as a failure, and until the 1970s the main priority of language-in-education planners was the acquisition of French. Under the Holderith education reforms, German teaching was reintroduced again in Alsace in 1972, as a trial in a number of schools in the final two years of primary school; regarded to have been a success, this was extended to all schools in 1974. The widespread reintroduction of German was significant not only for the acquisition, but also for the status of the German language in Alsace, which had been in decline since the end of the Second World War.

Marking a considerable shift in national language policy, Article 12 of the Haby law stated in 1975 that pupils should have the opportunity to learn their regional language, and about their regional culture, throughout their school career. In the 1980s the Savary education bills (cf. section 2.3.11) developed strategies to put language management into practice, including the task of teacher training, so that the RLs of France could claim a definite role in the domain in which their use had been forbidden for almost two centuries. Schwengler (1989, 41) argues that in Alsace by the time that the RL was afforded official status in education, its relevance had been reduced:

If such arrangements had been made in the 1950s or 1960s, at a time when almost all teachers mastered the German language and when all of the pupils were ‘dialect speakers’, they would have had a positive effect on the linguistic evolution of Alsace. But today the situation is different.³⁵

³⁵ ‘Si de telles dispositions avaient été prises dans les années 1950 ou 1960, à une époque où la quasi-totalité des enseignants maîtrisaient la langue allemande et où l’ensemble des élèves étaient ‘dialectophones’, elles n’auraient pas manqué d’avoir un effet positif sur l’évolution linguistique de l’Alsace. Mais aujourd’hui la situation est différente’ (Schwengler 1989, 41).

A similar argument applies to all of France's RLs, whose use declined across the board in the twentieth century. Although it may have been introduced too late to reverse significantly the shift in language practices, the recognition of the RLs in a domain that is traditionally regarded as a stronghold of the H language has elevated their social status.

The use of Alsatian had never before been officially permitted in the classroom in Alsace. Regional language-in-education planners were faced with a challenge due to the dual nature of the RL; should standard German, traditionally read and written in Alsace, but not spoken, be taught, or Alsatian, which has been widely spoken, but rarely written? In his role as Chief Education Officer in the Académie de Strasbourg (1981–91), Pierre Deyon published a series of education bills on the subject of RL teaching. In 1985, after consulting linguists from the University of Strasbourg, Deyon declared that:

There is only one scientifically correct definition of the regional language in Alsace; it is the Alsatian dialects of which the written expression is German. German is therefore one of the regional languages of France. One could even think that it is fortunate for Alsace, this relationship between its dialects and standard German, which allows us in turn to speak the regional language and the neighbour language. The dialects and German are united, one cannot practise a neighbour language policy and ignore the dialects, and one cannot celebrate the Alsatian dialects without understanding that, if they were cut off from German, they would inevitably grow poorer and perish.³⁶

Naming standard German as a RL of France is a decision that continues to divide opinion; however, in the education system it has been widely accepted. Bilingual

³⁶ 'Il n'existe qu'une seule définition scientifiquement correcte de la langue régionale en Alsace, ce sont les dialectes alsaciens dont l'expression écrite est l'allemand. L'allemand est donc une des langues régionales de France. On peut même penser que c'est une chance pour l'Alsace que cette relation linguistique entre ses dialectes et le Hochdeutsch, qui nous permet de parler tour à tour de langue régionale, puis de langue du voisin. Les dialectes et l'allemand sont solidaires, on ne peut pratiquer une politique de la langue du voisin en Alsace en ignorant les dialectes, on ne peut pas célébrer les dialectes alsaciens sans comprendre que, coupés de l'allemand, ils s'appauvriront inmanquablement et périront' (Deyon quoted in Schimpf and Muller 1998, 77).

education has been developed in Alsace since the early 1990s in both the public school and the private systems, following the basic principle of equal partial immersion in French and the RL, that is to say that the same number of teaching hours are allotted to each language (an explanation of the partial immersion bilingual education model will follow in section 4.3.2). In public education, although at first the local education authority considered including Alsatian in the RL teaching section, since 1995 official focus has shifted to the sole use of standard German (Huck 2008, 63). Nevertheless, there is no official obstacle to the use of Alsatian in the classroom, which constitutes a marked change in policy with that existed before the 1980s. Private schools have more control over the language policy followed in their schools; unlike public schools, where such a move would be deemed unconstitutional, full immersion in the RL is possible. In the bilingual primary classes offered by the ABCM *Zweisprachigkeit* associative school network, initially partial immersion in French and German was followed, but in recent years Alsatian has become increasingly present, particularly in its infant schools.³⁷ Perhaps it is unsurprising that standard German has gained the prominent position in RL teaching in Alsace, as Alsatian is a traditionally oral language variety, and education prioritises literacy. Furthermore, as Alsatian speaker numbers decline, the number of Alsatian-speaking teachers inevitably decreases as well, whereas German is the mother tongue of millions and is widely learnt in France as a foreign language. There is also an existing wealth of teaching materials for standard German. The development of RL teaching, and in particular bilingual education programmes, in Alsace will be examined in closer detail in chapter five.

³⁷ The name of the school network is made up of the acronym of French words *Association pour le binlinguisme dès la classe de maternelle* which translate into English as: Association for bilingualism from pre-school, coupled with the German word for bilingualism, *Zweisprachigkeit*.

3.8.2 Strasbourg: Home of the Key European Institutions

One year after the end of the Second World War, in a 1946 speech at the University of Zurich, Winston Churchill declared that: ‘The first step in the recreation of the European family must be a partnership between France and Germany. [...] The first step is to form a Council of Europe’ (quoted in Nelsen and Stubb 1994, 8). The European project was developed to overcome the kind of dangerous nationalisms that had devastating consequences during the Second World War. Poised between two countries that had been shaped by periods of intense nation building, Alsace was an obvious location for a site that would symbolise reconciliation between France and Germany. In 1949, the Council of Europe was established in Strasbourg, and the city since has become the home of the European Parliament and the European Court of Human Rights. Although no longer at the geographical centre of Europe, or the European Union, the Alsace region remains to be portrayed as the symbolic centre; on its website, the Alsace regional council describes Alsace as the ‘true centre of gravity of Europe’ (Région Alsace 2012).³⁸ The establishment of Alsace as the home of key European institutions has to some extent shifted the focus away from the region’s traumatic past. Furthermore, it has helped to restore a sense of regional pride, which could have led to more favourable attitudes towards the RL. However, in contrast to the immediate post-war period, when the Alsatian population may have sought refuge in their local language varieties (cf. section 3.8), Judge (2007, 87) claims that:

The creation of a European Community bringing France and Germany into a harmonious relationship, and the importance of Strasbourg in the new European context created a happier situation, which led to the Alsatian and Mosellan dialects declining rapidly.

³⁸ ‘L’Alsace, située au milieu de l’espace rhénan, constitue un territoire, véritable centre de gravité de l’Europe’ (Région Alsace 2012).

Thus it is suggested that Alsatian thrived better when the region experienced periods of unrest, as its speakers sought comfort in familiarity, whereas in less difficult times people are more likely to accept language shift. The reasons for changes in language attitudes and practices are often not straightforward; it is hard to determine whether the location of the European institutions in Strasbourg has had any direct influence on language policy in Alsace concerning the RL.

3.8.3 1968: 'A Turning Point in the Cultural Life of Alsace'

Vogler (2003, 318) describes 1968 as 'a turning point in the cultural life of Alsace in the form of an awareness of the regional identity, putting an end to the feeling of guilt that stifled Alsace since 1945'.³⁹ Corresponding with a wider movement of social change, a new generation of Alsatians, who could to some degree disassociate themselves from the traumatic events of the Second World War, stepped forward to highlight Alsatian culture. The participants of this movement drew attention to the language shift that was taking place in Alsace, and whereas in the immediate post-war era Alsatians mainly avoided the discussion of language policy, in 1968 individuals were more willing to engage in debates. Vogler (2003, 318) explains that the key actors involved were teachers, poets, singers and authors; their work led to a marked increase in works published on the subject of Alsace, known locally as *alsatiques*. Poetry and song in Alsatian became a popular medium, but the subject of Alsatian has mainly been written about in French. To some extent, these actions raised the status of Alsatian, and suggested to the Alsace population that they could still hold positive language beliefs towards this language variety. Today the majority of public libraries and bookshops in Alsace hold an *alsatiques* section, where one can

³⁹ 'La vie culturelle connaît un renouveau incontestable après 1968, année qui marque un tournant dans la vie culturelle de l'Alsace sous la forme d'une prise de conscience de l'identité régionale mettant fin au sentiment de culpabilité qui a étouffé l'Alsace depuis 1945' (Vogler 2003, 318).

find books on topics such as Alsatian history, geography, cuisine etc. One of the regional culture interest groups that emerged in 1968 is the Cercle René Schickele which continues to support actively bilingualism, and in particular bilingual education, in Alsace. The organisation also publishes the quarterly magazine *Land un Sproch*, which features articles in French, German and Alsatian. Vassberg (1993, 23) comments that, in spite of the Cercle René Schickele being the ‘the largest and best-organized group in Alsace’, ‘it does not appear that the Cercle René Schickele has attracted the participation of the general population.’ However, its continued existence over more than four decades suggests that it does engage with a section of Alsatians.

3.8.4 The RL in the Press and the Media

In the post-Second World War period, German was permitted to retain a role in the press in Alsace on the grounds that publications should be bilingual, and certain sections must appear in French as a legal requirement. For example, at least one quarter of the text of the publication’s front page should be in French, all articles specifically aimed at young people and families, and a half of sports-related columns (Wirtz-Habermeyer 1988, 78). Today there are two principal regional newspapers in widespread circulation in Alsace; *Dernières Nouvelles d’Alsace* and *L’Alsace*. The number of bilingual editions of both newspapers has dwindled consistently since the Second World War, as the demand for French monolingual editions has steadily increased. Bilingual editions of *Dernières Nouvelles d’Alsace* accounted for 80.5% of all editions in 1950, 70.5% in 1960, 47.5% in 1970, 28.7% in 1980, 17.8% and fell

to just 9.8% in 2002.⁴⁰ Similarly, bilingual editions of *L'Alsace* have fallen from 66.4% in 1950 to 4.8% in 2003 (Huck *et al* 2007, 35). If this trend continues, the future for bilingual press in Alsace will be difficult to guarantee, and standard German will lose completely one of its longest secured language domains. Although not traditionally regarded as a language of writing, and hence not a language variety used to present articles in the press, *Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace* currently publishes a weekly article in Alsatian. Alsatian is also sometimes present in announcements for birthdays, wedding anniversaries and deaths, notably concerning older people.

Public television station *France 3* broadcasts several programmes in Alsatian. In 2012, the programmes in Alsatian include: *Rund Um*, a twice-daily weekday news programme with French subtitles; the weekend regional culture programmes *Bàbbel Plàtz* and *GsunTheim*; and a cookery programme in Alsatian, *A Gueter*.⁴¹ Reilhac (1996, 129) states the presence of a news bulletin in Alsatian has a positive influence on language beliefs: “‘Rund Um’ proved that we could speak, in dialect, about modernity.”⁴² In 1996 *France 3* broadcast an adapted version of the popular French cartoon *Tintin* in an attempt to appeal to a younger demographic. The use of Alsatian in a domain that one would normally associate with the H language, such as the press and television, raises its social prestige. Furthermore, it introduces Alsatian to stage 2 of Fishman’s GIDS (Xish in the local media), which is identified as an important step

⁴⁰ Figures from 1950, 1960 and 1970 are quoted in Huck *et al* (2007, 28), and from 1980, 1990, 2002 are quoted in Huck *et al* (2007, 34).

⁴¹ Available at: <<http://alsace.france3.fr/#allProgramsBlk01>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)
 <<http://alsace.france3.fr/evenements/babbel-platz/>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)
 <<http://alsace.france3.fr/gsuntheim/>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)
 <<http://alsace.france3.fr/evenements/a-gueter/>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)

⁴² “‘Rund Um’ fait la preuve que l’on pouvait parler, en dialecte, de la modernité’ (Reilhac 1996, 129).

in reversing a language shift. However, the role of Alsatian remains marginal in this domain compared to that of French.

The public radio station *Radio France (France Bleu Elsass)* broadcasts daily in Alsatian. However, Reilhac (1996, 129) ventures that these broadcasts are aimed at an older audience: ‘No dialect-speaking FM radio station claims to reach to people under forty.’⁴³ Due to its geographical proximity, it is possible for Alsations to pick up free German television and radio programmes from Germany and Switzerland. Although German coverage of sporting events has traditionally been particularly popular (Huck *et al* 2007, 36; Kretz 1995, 49), currently French is undeniably the main language present regarding television, radio and the press.

With the rapid and widespread growth of use of computers and the Internet in the last two decades, individuals are able to access the media with increasing ease. Shohamy (2006, 128) explains the impact that this medium can have on language policy: ‘The Internet is a domineering mechanism that serves as a powerful arena for language negotiations and that has a strong effect on language behavior and practice.’ The Internet offers people access to information that otherwise may not have been available to them. As an example, subscribers are able to read bilingual editions of the regional newspapers *L’Alsace* and *Dernières Nouvelles d’Alsace* online; due to the decrease in demand these editions are not stocked in all outlets. It also allows people to express their language beliefs via online forums, and have their language beliefs influenced by other participants. At the time of writing, a page on the popular social networking website Facebook entitled: ‘Because the Alsatian dialect is on the road to disappearance– save it’ had over fourteen and a half

⁴³ ‘Aucune radio FM dialectale ne prétend plus s’adresser aux moins de quarante ans’ (Reilhac 1996, 129).

thousand fans.⁴⁴ However, Adamson (2007, 46) highlights the challenges that the Internet poses to language policy:

While it is reasonably easy for a motivated individual to set up a web page, its maintenance requires regular and constant oversight by a qualified person [...] It is unfortunately also the case that the Internet allows the publication of views and information not subject to any kind of editorial oversight. Anyone can say anything— but how can the truth of these statements be assessed? How many people are paying attention? Are the same people setting up a number of sites?

This suggests that the Internet can be used as a forum to express views that may not be acceptable for public diffusion elsewhere. The possibilities that the Internet provides are virtually infinite, and whether deemed desirable or undesirable, in democratic societies it acts as a tool from which bottom-up policies can be formed. At a time when computers are increasingly replacing pen and paper in the domain of study and work, the availability of languages is an important consideration in language policy. There is now a version of the popular Internet reference website Wikipedia in Alemannic, which corresponds mainly to the traditional oral language varieties spoken in the central and southern areas of Alsace. At the time of writing there are almost twelve thousand articles available on the Wikipedia website in Alemannic, compared to over one million articles both in French and German and in excess of four million articles in English.⁴⁵ In 2007, the computer software programme Windows Office was made available in Alsatian.⁴⁶ Such developments assist in restoring the function of minorised languages, and elevate their status in society. However, considering the large number of Internet pages and software

⁴⁴ Available at: <<http://www.facebook.com/pages/PARCE-QUE-LE-DIALECTE-ALSACIEN-EST-EN-VOIE-DE-DISPARITION-PRESERVONS-LE/241048129024>> (Accessed 25 July 2012). The term ‘fan’ is used here to represent individuals who have selected the ‘like’ button on the Facebook page.

⁴⁵ Available at: <http://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/List_of_Wikipedias> (Accessed 25 July 2012)

⁴⁶ Available at: <<http://www.microsoft.com/France/references/fiche-temoignage-avec-webcast.aspx?EID=255d49b2-18eb-41eb-887d-ce67e0279c31>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)

available in French, or German, in addition to the omnipresence of English, the impact of Alsatian in this domain is comparatively very limited.

3.8.5 OLCA and E Friehjohr fer unsri Sproch

Created by the Alsace regional council in 1994, OLCA (Office pour la Langue et Culture d'Alsace/Office for the Language and Culture of Alsace) promotes the regional language and culture of Alsace, and acts as a space where individuals and groups can source and distribute related information. OLCA produces vocabulary guides, offered to the public free of charge, on everyday topics such as food and drink, the weather and sports. Since 2009, OLCA also offers materials to new parents to encourage them to speak Alsatian with their children. The materials provided include an information pack about Alsatian, a height chart, a bilingual French/Alsatian car sticker to indicate that there is a child on board, and a CD with lullabies in Alsatian, French, German and English (*L'Alsace* 2009). The aim of such actions is to promote and valorise multilingualism, and to encourage the maintenance of, and positive attitudes towards, the regional language. OLCA has assumed an important role in corpus planning, status planning and acquisition planning for the RL.

The E Friehjohr fer unsri Sproch (a springtime for our language) association was founded in 2002 by the Alsace and Moselle regional magazine, *L'Ami hebdo*, and is supported by OLCA. Each year the association coordinates a programme of events to celebrate Alsatian; its website states that in 2012 'this festival of our regional language is going to bring together hundreds of events prepared enthusiastically by thousands of Alsatians who want to share the linguistic treasure

that has been entrusted to them for over a thousand years.’⁴⁷ Initiatives to celebrate the RL, that are undertaken in towns and villages throughout the region, in or on the subject of Alsatian, include concerts, lectures, readings, discussion groups, church services, plays, as well as events such as the installation of bilingual road signs.⁴⁸ Furthermore, as a part of the actions in 2010, a televised debate in Alsatian on the subject of the RL was broadcast on the television station *France 3 (L’Alsace 2010)*. Such actions raise public awareness of the RL and encourage an interest in it.

One of the movement’s actions has been to distribute stickers stating ‘Mir rede Elassisch’ (we speak Alsatian). These small stickers are offered free of charge from OLCA and can be seen displayed most often on shop and restaurant doors. Bogatto and Hélot (2010) classify such items as bottom-up signs, as they are imposed by individuals, unlike top-down signs ‘which are the product of powerful institutions’ (2010, 279). The E Frierhjoer fer unsri Sproch movement has also supported the translation of town and street names into Alsatian; bilingual (French/Alsatian) and trilingual (French/German/Alsatian) top-down signage marks a new phase in the region’s linguistic landscape. Now that gallicisation and degallisation have become less relevant, the region’s linguistic heritage is becoming more visible in the public space. Bogatto and Hélot note that, in spite of Alsatian not being widely recognised as a written language variety, its presence should not be ignored when examining the linguistic landscape of Alsace (2010, 283–84). The efforts of E Frierhjoer fer unsri Sproch association during the last decade have

⁴⁷ ‘Créée à l’image de la Fête de la Musique, cette Fête de notre langue régionale va regrouper des centaines de manifestations préparées avec enthousiasme par des milliers d’Alsaciens qui veulent ainsi partager le trésor linguistique qui leur est confié depuis plus de mille ans.’ Available at: <<http://www.frierhjoer.com/>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)

⁴⁸ Available at: <<http://www.frierhjoer.com/fr/programme-des-manifestations.html>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)

succeeded in raising the profile of Alsatian, which acts to promote its practice and improve language attitudes towards it.

3.8.6 Alsatian Theatre

The Alsatian theatre was founded in Strasbourg in 1898. Presenting plays uniquely in Alsatian, Fischer (2010, 30) states that this helped to forge a regional identity, due to the ‘non-partisan quality and ubiquity’ of this language variety. At that time Alsatian offered the most neutral form of communication, as opposed to French and German which were associated with national loyalties. This started a popular tradition of presenting plays in Alsatian throughout Alsace. Although the number of Alsatian speakers has declined considerably since the mid-twentieth century, two hundred thousand spectators continue to see Alsatian plays each season, with over two hundred Alsatian-speaking theatre troupes currently performing (De Boissésou 2007). Productions in Alsatian are frequently, but not limited to, satirical comedies. Each year over a period of several months the *Théâtre de la Choucrouterie* (named after the emblematic Alsatian dish) in Strasbourg simultaneously presents a satirical review in Alsatian and French in its two auditoriums. Holding sixty and ninety spectators, it is important to note that the Alsatian version is currently performed in the larger auditorium due to a greater demand. Since the turn of the last century, regional theatre in Alsace, heralded ‘a sprightly dinosaur’ by Woehl (2009), has consistently remained a space where individuals can express themselves in, and be exposed to, Alsatian.

3.8.7 The Vitality of Alsatian at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century

Ascertaining accurate speaker numbers of any language is not a straightforward process. Logistically, gaining a response from every member of the community being studied presents many challenges. Furthermore, for a number of complex reasons, the responses offered by individuals may not reflect reality; if they feel uncomfortable or unable to respond truthfully, respondents may offer the answer deemed by society to be most correct. Regarding speaker numbers of France's RLs, any official questioning of language practices, for example in a census survey, would be deemed unconstitutional, as Article 2 of the French Constitution names French as *the* language of the Republic.

Figures quoted on the website of OLCA and in Bothorel-Witz and Huck (2003) suggest that 61% of Alsace inhabitants spoke Alsatian at the beginning of the twenty-first century, in contrast with 95% at the turn of the previous century (Figure 9). Closer analysis of a 1997 poll reveals that intergenerational transmission has declined dramatically in recent years. According to that survey, whereas 86% of respondents over the age of sixty declared themselves to be Alsatian speakers, this figure stood at only 38% in the category of 18–29 year-olds. The results of a poll carried out by OLCA in 2012 revealed that only 43% of the eight hundred respondents described themselves as being able to speak Alsatian well, with a further 33% declaring that they could understand or speak the language variety to a lesser extent (OLCA 2012a). Writing a quarter of a century ago, Wardhaugh (1987, 112) describes Alsatian bilingualism as 'a fact of life', although even at that time he recognised that it was 'a bilingualism on the wane'. Caution must always be taken when predicting speaker numbers on the basis of one survey, and there exists a question over accuracy in self-reporting language practices (Milroy and Milroy 1999,

15). However, the latest figures available indicate that the post-war language shift away from Alsatian continues at a steady pace.

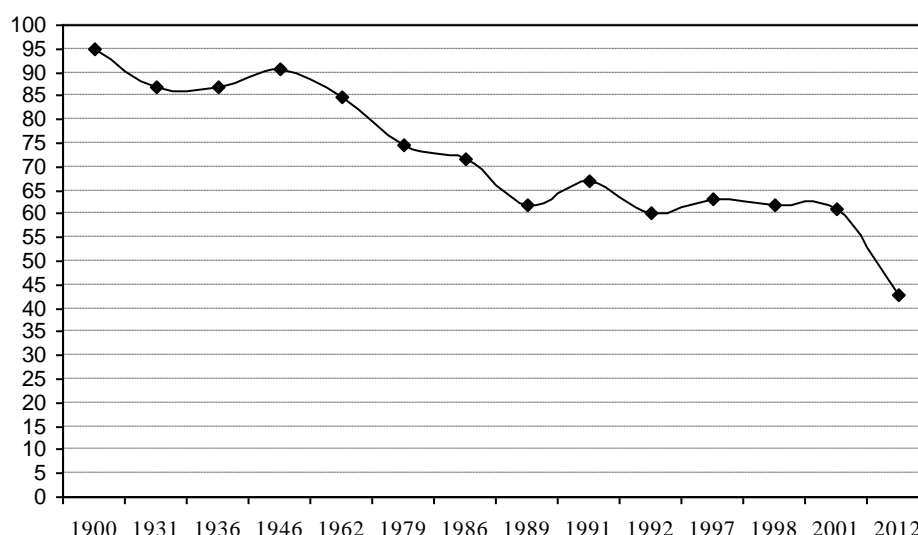


Figure 9: Percentage of Alsatian speakers, 1900–2012⁴⁹

Klein (2007, 15–16) reports that today the use of Alsatian is favoured by older people, those living in the countryside, by manual workers and employees, whilst French is associated with the young, with towns and cities, with professionals and with management. Therefore, the link between French and modernity and social progress is persistent. Vassberg (1993, 172) notes that young Alsatian speakers may practise it with their parents, but not with siblings or friends. This association between Alsatian and an older generation suggests that these speakers will be less likely to speak it with their own children. Furthermore, it has been well documented in sociolinguistics that females are more likely to drop a non-standard denigrated language for the standard one that is associated with prestige and social progress

⁴⁹ The figures for 1900, 1946, 1997, 2001 and 2012 are from OLCA (2012b); the figures for 1931, 1962, 1979, 1986, 1989, 1991, 1992 and 1998 are quoted in Bothorel-Witz and Huck (2003, 32).

(Labov 1990). Therefore, according to this theory, mothers are less likely to transmit Alsatian in favour of the national standard language, French.

Bothorel-Witz and Huck (2003, 37) comment that: ‘Regarding possible arenas for the transmission of the dialect, it seems that, apart from rare exceptions, the family constitutes, in the representations of speakers, the privileged setting.’⁵⁰ Widespread acceptance of the family setting being the only suitable domain for the learning of Alsatian acts as an obstacle in acquisition planning in an educational setting. As intergenerational transmission is in decline, as is the case for all of the RLs of France, if revitalisation is to occur, the actors involved will be required to be more receptive to RL acquisition and use outside of the traditional home domain.

Adamson (2007, 95–96) concludes that ‘[w]hile the situation for Alsatian may be less dire than for some of the other languages, it is nevertheless desperate’. With speaker numbers estimated at approximately 60% of the population in 2001, Alsatian entered the twenty-first century in a strong position compared with the other RLs of France, surpassed only by Occitan numerically (with two million speakers) (Judge 2007, 66). However, if the recently-projected figure of 43% is an accurate representation of Alsatian speakers in Alsace today, the language variety can be described as being in a desperate position.

The observation that the employment of Alsatian has decreased the most in large towns and cities is not only the result of existing inhabitants switching to French. The decline is also linked to an increase in the number of people living in Strasbourg, Colmar and Mulhouse who generally are less likely to speak Alsatian, for example people born outside of the region and young people (INSEE 2002, 4).

The changing demographic must be taken into consideration when examining

⁵⁰ ‘Concernant les possibles espaces de transmission du dialecte, il apparaît, à de rares exceptions près, que l’espace familial constitue, dans les représentations des locuteurs, le cadre privilégié’ (Bothorel-Witz and Huck 2003, 37).

language practices in a modern context. According to a report delivered by INSEE (the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies), migrants make up ten per cent of the population of Alsace, a proportion which is second only to the region of the Île de France (2006, 3). Unless they originate from neighbouring areas in Germany and Switzerland, it is likely that newly settled inhabitants will have a lesser interest in language policy concerning the RL. Indeed they may bring with them other languages, which they wish to continue practising, not only at home but also in public domains such as schools. Modern societies are increasingly multilingual, whether or not this is acknowledged by official policies, and therefore the linguistic balance is shifting in traditionally RL-speaking regions as in any others.

3.8.8 Learning the RL outside of the Home and School

Beginners' courses in Alsatian are provided by OLCA and Free Universities,⁵¹ and there are also a number of online courses available.⁵² These lessons are often fee paying (apart from most online courses), but they are available to any member of the public wishing to partake. Subsidies are available from the Alsace regional council for individuals or groups who wish to open new RL language classes.⁵³ The recent

⁵¹ Free Universities, known as *Universités populaires* in France, offer adult learning courses on a range of subjects. Participants pay a fee for each course they choose to follow, there are no academic entrance requirements and normally participants are not able to gain an academic degree from these establishments. There are over thirty Free Universities currently operating in the region of Alsace. Available at: <<http://www.universitepopulaire.eu/Liste-des-Universites-Populaires-de-France.html>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)

⁵² Online resources to learn Alsatian include, but are not limited to the following websites, available at: <<http://www.verdammi.org/cours.html>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)
<http://www.lexilogos.com/alsacien_langue_dictionnaires.htm> (Accessed 25 July 2012)
<<http://www.olcalsace.org/fr/lexiques>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)

⁵³ Available at: <<http://www.region-alsace.eu/aide/soutien-lorganisation-dateliers-de-pratique-de-lalsacien>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)

publication *Alsacien pour les nuls* ('Alsatian for dummies') (2010) joins a range of other written materials to aid the learning of Alsatian.⁵⁴

A newspaper article published in *L'Alsace* (Schulthess 2010) reported that social care workers in the town of Mulhouse are now obliged to complete a language course in Alsatian, regardless of their origin. This is due to the fact that the older generations that they will be working with are often Alsatian-speaking. The requirement to speak Alsatian as an employment criterion could encourage more people to maintain or to learn it. The presence of Alsatian at stage 3 of Fishman's GIDS (Xish in the local and regional work sphere) would aid to reverse the language shift in Alsace. However, as mastery of the French language is the rule rather than the exception for Alsations born after the 1940s, the request to speak Alsatian in the work domain seems unlikely to continue in the long term.

The learning of France's RLs is often limited to the region where they are traditionally spoken, yet the *Maison de l'Alsace* in Paris offers monthly lessons to learn Alsatian and about the region's culture.⁵⁵ Furthermore, as standard German is described as a component of the RL of Alsace, there is a wide range of learning opportunities that is available in France and internationally, although this will be promoted as foreign language learning. It is clear that, if the RL is not acquired in the home or at school in Alsace, there are many other opportunities available to acquire Alsatian and standard German.

⁵⁴ Recent publications in the same series include conversation guides for some of the other RLs of France, namely Basque, Breton and Corsican.

⁵⁵ Available at: <http://www.maison-alsace.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=80&Itemid=2> (Accessed 25 July 2012).

3.8.9 Alsatian: A Tool to Learn English?

In recent years Adolf, an Alsatian speaker and former teacher of English, has published a number of works to promote the learning of the English language through Alsatian (Adolf 1996b, 2002, 2006), and also to help English speakers to learn Alsatian (Adolf 2007). He argues (1996a, 79): ‘Alsatian can be a good basis to learn English, with which it shares a number of similarities. This should add another string to the bow of dialect speakers, and encourage them in the study of languages.’⁵⁶ English is the first foreign language taught at school in France, learnt by 80% of primary school pupils, a figure that rises to 93.2% in secondary schools (Hélot 2003, 257). As a language of high international prestige, towards which many people hold positive language beliefs, Hélot states that in education all languages are in competition with English (2003, 260). If Alsatians associate learning Alsatian with a better understanding of English, this could increase its chance of survival.

3.8.10 Employment across Borders: Motivations to Maintain Bilingualism in Alsace

In 2009, 64,200 cross-border workers (*frontaliers*) from Alsace were employed in Germany or German-speaking Switzerland (INSEE 2009a). Knowledge of either standard German or Alsatian, which is similar to the language varieties traditionally spoken in the areas of Germany and Switzerland positioned near to Alsace, can provide Alsatians with the opportunity to seek employment outside of the national borders. Considering the recent global economic crisis, increased employment prospects in German-speaking countries is an important factor in the formulation of language beliefs and language practices. If parents recognise Alsatian, or German, as an asset for their children’s future careers, this would lead to increased

⁵⁶ ‘L’alsacien peut être bonne base d’apprentissage de l’anglais, avec lequel il partage un nombre de similitudes. Voilà qui devrait ajouter une corde supplémentaire à l’arc des dialectophones, et les encourager dans l’étude des langues’ (Adolf 1996a, 79).

intergenerational transmission of the former, and an increase in demand for bilingual education in the latter. As an official language not only in Germany and Switzerland, but also Austria, Belgium, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and the region of South Tyrol in Italy, standard German is the most widely spoken mother tongue in the EU with approximately ninety million native speakers, and has millions more second language speakers across Europe and beyond (European Union 2008, 5). Therefore, it is viewed positively as its knowledge presents a number of opportunities for personal and economic advancement.

3.9 The Ambiguous Status of the RL in Alsace

3.9.1 Alsatian

Walter (1999, 15) notes that there are a range of French terms employed to describe the RLs, namely *langue* (language), *idiome* (idiom), *dialecte* (dialect), *patois*, *parler*, or *jargon* (which are local speech forms perceived in society as having a lower status than a dialect). In Alsace, Alsatian is referred to in French as *l'alsacien*, *le dialecte alsacien*, *le dialecte*; in Alsatian *elsässisch* and *elsässerditsch* are also employed. Vassberg (1993, 68) suggests that terms such as *patois*, associated with low prestige, very localised speech forms are not generally employed owing to the traditionally widespread use of Alsatian.

Although the term ‘dialect’ is most often used in relation to the language variety traditionally spoken in Alsace, which is referred to as Alsatian in this thesis, its use can be problematic. In recent decades linguists have acknowledged that no language variety is more correct, or linguistically better, than another (Wardhaugh 2009, 356). However, society assigns social meaning to language terms, and perceived linguistic hierarchies emerge, with language being most highly valued (cf.

section 4.2.1 for a further discussion of language and dialect). In linguistics there is an oft-cited adage that states: ‘a language is a dialect with an army and a navy.’

Sebba (1997, 3) explains:

In other words, the difference lies not in the linguistic system, but in the social world where people organise themselves into political entities with boundaries and the mechanisms to defend them. A ‘language’ is often just another national asset which the army and navy must be mobilised to protect.

Hence, power begets power. In France the dialect spoken in the Île de France area was elevated to the status of national language, and imposed upon every corner of French territory, as it was the language of the leaders.

Regarding the linguistic development of Alsatian, Bothorel-Witz and Huck (2003, 24) note that there has been both horizontal convergence (increase in similarity between the different dialects) and vertical convergence (whereby there has also been convergence between Alsatian and the standard languages: French and German). Humans rarely live in isolation; even if they remain in the same location, they are subjected to external influences, and hence their languages are subject to change. In the absence of established corpus planning agents, such as language academies, minorised languages become increasingly dependent on borrowings from other languages. For Alsatian, this has led to the adoption or adaptation of lexical items from French and standard German.

Although similar primarily spoken localised Germanic language varieties in Switzerland and Luxembourg are widely recognised as languages in their own right, in Alsace there is greater reluctance to acknowledge Alsatian as a language. Philipps (1978, 67) suggests that language policy for Alsatian could have been different depending on the region’s geopolitical fate:

If, during the breakup of the German Holy Roman Empire, Alsace had been able to form an independent political entity, like Switzerland, the dialect would have remained, as in Switzerland (or in Luxembourg), the oral means of communication *par excellence*.⁵⁷

In the examples of German-speaking Switzerland and Luxembourg, there exists a stable diglossia, whereby Swiss German and Luxembourgish each have a definite function in the certain domains. McColl Millar (2005, 1) states that: ‘There is little or no social obligation to use the external standard in everyday life. Indeed, use of the standard in certain circumstances might even be considered offensive.’ In Alsace, Alsatian has not persisted in the same way, as traditional RL domains have been increasingly influenced by French.

In the last decade, the term ‘collateral language’ has been introduced as a concept in linguistics, initially to describe the *langue d’oïl* Picard, and extended to refer to languages ‘felt to be “close”– too close in the eyes of some people– to the dominant or standard (“umbrella”) language’ (Eloy 2001, 6).⁵⁸ Judge (2007, 2) explains that:

Collateral languages such as Picard versus French, or Scots versus English, have a common origin but have developed differently. There may be differences between them at all levels– phonological, morphological, syntactical and lexical– but they remain close in so far as they are considered to be mutually intelligible.

The term ‘collateral language’ could be used to describe Alsatian, replace other terms which have taken on negative connotations in society, and hence raise the RL’s

⁵⁷ ‘Si, lors de la désagrégation du Saint-Empire romain de nation allemande, l’Alsace avait pu former une entité politique indépendante comme la Suisse, le dialecte serait resté, comme en Suisse (ou au Luxembourg), le moyen par excellence de la communication orale’ (Philipps 1978, 67).

⁵⁸ ‘La spécificité première de ces langues, qui les différencie d’autres variétés “minorées”, est qu’elles sont senties comme “proches”– trop proches, aux yeux de certains– de la langue dominante ou standard (“toit”)’ (Eloy 2001, 6).

status. However, Judge (2007, 2) warns that the use of the term ‘collateral language’ can also cause contention:

This in itself may depend on a hidden political agenda: claiming that a dialect is a language, or variants of a language are separate languages, is not only determined by linguistic factors, but is a matter of politics, and fits into a broader context.

In Alsace, there is some opposition to the use of the term ‘language’ in reference to Alsatian. Klein (2007, 54) refuses to accept the concept of *alsacien* (Alsatian), stating that: ‘We speak at least four varieties of German in Alsace [...] It would be preferable, regarding the spoken language, to speak of Alsatian dialectal German, *elsasserditsch*.’⁵⁹ The lack of consistent terminology is damaging to language beliefs, as Alsatian is associated with confusion and incoherence, as opposed to the clearly defined powerful standard languages present.

Alsatian has not undergone a process of standardisation and codification. Klein (2007, 55) argues that this would give Alsatian an artificial character, and limit its rich diversity, whilst also creating a divide with the German-speaking world. Where Alsatian is written, writers transcribe words phonetically. However, many Alsatians feel unable or reluctant to write down their spoken language, which limits its function in society.

3.9.2 Standard German

The recognition of standard German, a widely-taught foreign language in the rest of France, as the RL in Alsace, which has been supported in particular by language-in-education policy-makers since the 1980s, renders the situation in Alsace a unique

⁵⁹ ‘On dit aussi «alsacien» alors que celui-ci n’existe pas. On parle au moins quatre formes d’allemand en Alsace (francique rhénan palatin, francique rhénan lorrain, bas-alémanique et haut alémanique). [...] Il serait préférable, s’agissant de la langue parlée, de dire allemand dialectal alsacien, *elsasserditsch*’ (Klein 2007, 54).

case. Taking into consideration the example of Corsica, which Laroussi and Marcellesi (1993, 92) describe as being ‘analogous’ to that of the Alsatian in some respects, there is not a similar association with the former H language on Corsica, Tuscan Italian. There are a number of factors that explain why language policy in Alsace has developed differently to that on Corsica, including the prolonged periods of German political control over Alsace until the Second World War, the geographical position of Alsace, and the prestige of the German language.

German is frequently described as a neighbour language (*la langue du voisin*) in Alsace, which bridges the gap between RL and foreign language. Considering the intertwined history of Alsace and Germany, and the close geographical proximity of the two, within walking distance of each other at certain points along the Rhine, perhaps it is understandable that inhabitants of Alsace would prefer the term ‘neighbour language’ over ‘foreign language’.

In conjunction with the debates on the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages, a survey of 702 adults undertaken by *Dernières Nouvelles d’Alsace* revealed that 95% of respondents believed Alsatian to be the RL of Alsace, 1% that it was German, and 1% that it was both Alsatian and German (3% did not offer a response) (Keiflin 1999). This suggests that recent top-down language policies are not completely compatible with *de facto* language beliefs. A 2003 survey reported in the same newspaper suggested that public opinion is divided on the promotion of the RL in Alsace, with 51% of respondents opting for German, and 49% for Alsatian (Sorg 2003). The contrast in the responses on the definition and the promotion of the RL suggests that utility, rather than the maintenance of regional heritage, is prioritised by some individuals.

3.10 Conclusion

Taking into consideration the three components of Spolsky's language policy model over the period of time examined in this chapter, the position of the three main linguistic protagonists has evolved constantly. Alsatian has been the most consistent force and, in spite of language management efforts to displace it, it remained the language of the majority of Alsatians until the mid-twentieth century. Standard German, emerging in the fifteenth century, existed first as the H language in a diglossia with Alsatian and its use has been banned at times during times of French rule. In recent years there have been more favourable attitudes towards German, but it no longer holds the position that it once did in Alsatian society. The French language, enforced at the time of the Revolution, and whose use was reasserted in the interwar period, has imposed itself completely since 1945. Employing a combination of language policy mechanisms, the revolutionary ideal of French monolingualism has progressively become a reality in Alsace.

The ambiguous status of the RL in Alsace acts as a hindrance to any revitalisation efforts. In his monograph *Main basse sur ma langue* ('Hands off my language') Grossmann (1999, 27) contests the decision to promote German as the RL of Alsace:

If, linguistically, the affirmation 'German, written form of Alsatian' is not false, it is not sociologically consistent with contemporary reality. It could have corresponded with reality between 1870 and 1918, to a semi-reality between 1918 and 1939, but today it is a falsehood, and moreover dangerous politically speaking.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ 'Si, linguistiquement, l'affirmation « allemand forme écrite de l'alsacien » n'est pas fausse, elle n'est pas sociologiquement conforme à la réalité contemporaine. Cela aurait pu correspondre encore à la réalité entre 1870 et 1918, à une semi-vérité entre 1918 et 1939, mais aujourd'hui c'est une contre-vérité, au surplus dangereuse sur le plan politique' (Grossmann 1999, 27).

In response to Grossman's comments on German, Zipfel (1999, 8) calls his publication a 'nationalistic crime'.⁶¹ Huck *et al* (2007, 78) conclude that Alsatian could not survive without the presence of standard German: 'The Alsatian dialect needs German to recharge its batteries to acquire new words or to express new realities.'⁶² A clearer general consensus on how the RL should be defined and promoted in all domains would allow for greater chances to reverse the language shift, as activists would be able to work together to achieve the same goals.

Since the mid-1970s official language policy has shown greater tolerance towards the RLs of France. Although the Charter for European Regional or Minority Languages has not been ratified, the debates evoked since its adoption have raised awareness of the RLs. In spite of the prioritisation of the French language in the Constitution, the 2008 amendment of Article 75-1 which now states that 'the regional languages belong to the heritage of France', demonstrates a level of unprecedented official recognition (cf. section 2.3.14).

Huck (2008, 64) explains that, in spite of the opportunities for the promotion of the RL since the 1980s, particularly in education, there has not been a focused development of a language policy towards Alsatian, as there has been for German. He concludes that: 'In the end, it is standard languages (vs. non-standard dialects) that are the subject, for completely different reasons, of language policies. The dialect remains, regardless of the period observed, at the periphery of the State.'⁶³

⁶¹ "“Main basse sur ma langue” tombe dans le panneau des “crimes nationalitaires”” (Zipfel 1999, 8).

⁶² 'Le dialecte alsacien a besoin de l'allemand pour se ressourcer, pour acquérir des mots nouveaux ou pour dire les réalités nouvelles. Pour l'enseignement bilingue, la leçon doit être celle-ci: le dialecte pour l'oral ou pour une partie de l'oral, l'allemand standard pour l'oral et pour l'écrit' (Huck *et al* 2007, 78).

⁶³ 'Au total, ce sont langues standards (vs dialecte non standardisé) qui sont l'objet, pour des raisons tout à fait différentes, de politiques linguistiques. Le dialecte reste, quelle que soit la période observée, à la périphérie de l'Etat' (Huck 2008, 64).

Alsatian maintains a definite presence in local theatre. However, if the intergenerational transmission of Alsatian continues to decline, one can speculate that the number of Alsatian-speaking actors and spectators will correspondingly diminish. Nevertheless, the *Théâtre alsacien de Strasbourg* claims that its audience is comprised of spectators of all generations.⁶⁴ The monitoring of viewer and listener numbers of Alsatian television and radio programmes, as well as theatre audiences, would provide a useful indication for the vitality of Alsatian.

Intergenerational transmission of Alsatian has fallen dramatically in the post-Second World War era, as families choose to pass on only the French language to their children. Considering Fishman's GIDS, this signifies that Alsatian could be in danger of no longer being able to secure stage 6, which, as argued by Fishman (1991, 398), constitutes 'the heart of the entire intergenerational pursuit' (cf. section 2.2). Following a closer examination of language-in-education policy in Alsace (chapter five), there will be a further analysis of the vitality of the Alsatian regional language employing Fishman's GIDS in the thesis conclusion.

Alsace is no longer a 'victory trophy in Franco-German conflicts' (Fischer 2010, 2); since 1945 the region has enjoyed a period of stability, and relations between its current and former nations have increasingly strengthened. German is no longer regarded as the language of the enemy. Nevertheless, the subject of the RL retains a degree of controversy for some Alsacians. Although key actors in the regional education system have supported the definition of the RL of Alsace being a combination of the spoken Alsatian and written standard German, this is not accepted by all sections of the population. Following an introduction to the field of bilingual education and the development of bilingual education in France in chapter four, in

⁶⁴ *Théâtre alsacien de Strasbourg* website: 'Théâtre d'aujourd'hui, notre répertoire s'élargit afin que nos spectateurs, de toutes générations, trouvent dans notre programmation des spectacles de qualité.' Available at: <<http://www.theatre-alsacien-strasbourg.fr/index.php>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)

chapter five there will be a closer examination of the language-in-education policies currently being employed in RL bilingual primary schools in Alsace. The possibilities and the realities for the RL in both of its forms will be considered, which will reflect contemporary language policy in this region.

Chapter 4: Bilingual Education: Concepts and the Development of Bilingual Education Programmes in France and Alsace

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will introduce the subject of bilingual education. Following a discussion of bilingual education and bilingualism, the first part will present the definitions of this type of education programme, and some of the different methods and aims that it entails; the second part will examine the development of bilingual education programmes in France and in the region of Alsace. This will lead on to the case study in the next chapter that forms the central part of this thesis.

Before looking closely at the situation in Alsace, it is important to understand the wider issues connected to bilingual education, which is described by Baker as ‘a simplistic label for a complex phenomenon’ (2011, 207). There are many different bilingual education programmes currently in existence worldwide, involving a wide number of languages. Shohamy (2006) argues that language policy is never neutral. Furthermore, she contends that language-in-education policy ‘represents a very strong form of language manipulation’ (2006, 78). Bilingual education programmes are implemented with the aim of influencing the language practices and language attitudes of future generations. It is therefore important to consider why and how such programmes are put into place, bearing in mind that language policy decisions, in particular those that are concerned with language acquisition, are always made with certain goals in mind.

4.2 Bilingual Education and Bilingualism

The number of bilingual education programmes globally has increased considerably since the mid-twentieth century. In addition, the teaching of second or foreign languages has assumed a new importance in the last sixty years, owing to the growth

in interactions within the international community, the rise of English as a global lingua franca, and also a general increase in international travel. However, Baker (2011, 183) highlights that bilingual education, like bilingualism, is not a recent development; it has been in existence for millennia, and he underlines the importance of examining bilingual education programmes in their specific historical contexts.

As a result of nation-building efforts, monolingualism in a dominant national language has become accepted widely as a societal norm, apart from in countries that are officially bilingual such as Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg and Canada. However, Grosjean (1982, 1) highlights that bilingualism is a fact of life throughout the world and throughout societies; furthermore, Baker contends that, numerically, today there are more bilinguals than monolinguals in the world (2011, 66). Grosjean explains of bilingualism: ‘it is a phenomenon that has existed since the beginning of language in human history’ (1982, 1). A bilingual person is described as someone who uses two or more languages or dialects in their everyday life (Grosjean 2010, 4). Owing to the complicated nature of the RL in Alsace, which is recognised as existing in two forms, a discussion of the definitions of language and the reaction of education systems towards different varieties of language is important here.

4.2.1 Definitions of Language and How Education Systems Deal with Language

The terms language, dialect and language variety have been employed throughout this thesis without providing a definition until this point. A language can be defined as ‘the system of spoken or written communication used by a particular country, people, community, etc., typically consisting of words within a regular grammatical and syntactic structure’ (OED, 2013). A dialect is defined as a variety of language that is different in its grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation from another language

variety (Trudgill 2000, 5). Therefore, all language-users can be described as dialect-speakers, as everyone speaks a particular variety of language. However, the term dialect has gained a negative connotation in society, as often it has been employed to describe a variety of language that differs from the standard language variety favoured by the politically dominant group. Therefore, beliefs towards different forms of language are influenced by extra-linguistic factors. In line with the approach taken by Trudgill (1975, 17), the term language variety has been used instead of dialect here to describe Alsatian as it is deemed to be more neutral. However, in Alsace Alsatian is referred to widely as *le dialecte* (cf. section 3.9.1).

Although linguists have long contended that no language variety is intrinsically better than any other, this view has not been shared by education systems, whose aim has been to teach dominant, standard languages (Spolsky 1998, 74). Therefore education systems can be said to have promoted elite language education. Bourdieu (1991, 45) contends that the language employed by the state-governed settings, including state education, creates a situation in which that language becomes viewed as the most legitimate form of language ‘against which all linguistic practices are objectively measured.’ Bourdieu introduces the idea of ‘linguistic capital’, whereby competence in a language variety is seen as a commodity that has a value within a linguistic market, with competence in the legitimate language (i.e. that which has gained legitimate status in society) being viewed as being a most valuable asset (1991, 55). The act of only promoting of languages viewed to be legitimate and valuable has meant that other languages have been minorised in formal education.

Hélot and Ò Laoire (2011, xiv) explain that the inclusion of some language varieties will not be considered in formal schooling:

While certain languages are selected to be taught, only certain standard varieties are accepted; while other languages are introduced at earlier or later points in learners' education, some remain in the margins or are expected to be taught outside of the school system.

As standard language varieties are deemed more useful in order to communicate to a larger speech community, and thus more useful in the linguistic market, non-standard language varieties are often ignored or discouraged at school. However, Milroy (2001, 534) contends that the division between a standard and non-standard language is controlled by ideologies, as in practice linguistic variance is inevitable. Positive language beliefs towards standard languages extend beyond the school domain in 'standard language cultures' (Milroy 2001, 530); the standard languages have acquired a prestigious status in society as a result of the perceived prestige of their speakers (2001, 532). Milroy explains that where more than two or more language varieties exist together 'it is taken for granted as common sense that some forms are right and others wrong' (2001, 535); this links to Bourdieu's notion of legitimate languages. As standard French and standard German have been promoted as the most legitimate languages in France and Germany respectively since the beginning of their shaping into nation-states, this has left Alsatian in a threatened position as it is difficult to compete with these two languages in the linguistic market.

Hélot and De Mejía (2008, 1) argue that there exists a hierarchy of minority languages in education systems, with, for example, migrant languages perceived as being less worthy than RLs: 'It is as if some minority languages are now seen as belonging to the nation, as being part of its heritage, and others, because they have come with economic migrants, are envisaged, like their speakers, as outside' (2008, 14). Hélot (2008, 203) suggests that the bilingualism of some minority language speakers remains 'invisible'. Again this outlines the complexity of language policy,

and it illustrates that there is not a straightforward status division between majority and minority languages, as some minority languages are minorised more than others.

4.2.2 The Development of Literacy and Biliteracy in Bilingual Education

Linked to the discussion of standard and non-standard languages is the issue of literacy, which is considered to be one of the main goals of formal education. Datta (2000, 14) explains that ‘[i]n every society literacy carries a “power status” and is perceived as enhancing economic, social and political opportunities for the individuals.’ Hamers and Blanc (2000, 318–19) also comment on the prominent role of literacy in society:

The importance attached to the development of literacy is based on a worldwide conviction that literacy is an instrument for changing the individual’s perception and organisation of cognition, and that this leads to economic improvement and is a prerequisite for all functional education.

Biliteracy, that is ‘the use of two or more languages in or around writing’ (Hornberger 2003, xii), is a particularly prominent issue in bilingual education. The ideology of the bilingual education programme will influence strongly the development of literacy in the languages involved; that is to say that literacy will be developed in the language or languages deemed to be desirable.

The issue of literacy can become complicated with regard to minority languages, in particular in cases where the language involved has not traditionally been associated with writing. Jaffe (2003, 43) describes literacy as a symbol of ‘linguageness’, and therefore the act of writing a language is perceived as raising its status. Baker (2011, 320) explains the positive influence that literacy has with regard to promoting an endangered language:

Literacy in the minority language not only provides a greater chance of survival at an individual and group level for that language. It also may encourage rootedness, self-esteem, the vision and world-view of one's heritage culture, self-identity and intellectual empathy.

The issue of literacy and biliteracy will be an important consideration in the closer examination of RL bilingual education programmes in Alsace. It is especially interesting owing to the dual nature of the RL, as was discussed in chapter three.

4.2.3 Bilingual Education as a Means of Language Revitalisation

Although it has been argued that learning a language in school is not as effective as mother tongue acquisition (Fishman 1991, 372; Fishman 2000, 458; Spolsky 2008, 158), the presence of a minority language in an educational setting is nevertheless highly influential with regard to its status. Romaine (1995, 242) highlights the impact that education has on the behaviour of its participants: 'As one of society's main socializing instruments, the school plays a powerful role in exerting social control over its students. It endorses mainstream and largely middle-class values.' This reminds us that education is, on the whole, an example of top-down policy-making. However, some bilingual education programmes, in particular heritage language programmes, are established as the result of bottom-up movements, led by language activists or parents. The language ideology of the group that establishes and financially supports the education programme is likely to influence the language management strategies that are implemented. Cummins (2001, 300) suggests that '[p]ublic schools serve the societies that fund them and they aim to graduate students with the knowledge, skills and values that will contribute most effectively to their societies.' That is to say, pupils will learn the languages and varieties of language that education planners believe to be most beneficial.

Peter *et al* (2011, 187) state that the last two decades have witnessed a large increase in the number of bilingual programmes aimed at the maintenance and revitalisation of endangered minority languages ‘as speakers of those languages– or descendants of speakers– have recognized the cultural and intellectual loss that accompanies language death’. Since the 1960s, there has been a worldwide recognition of linguistic human rights and a rising awareness of the importance of language education (García 2009, 112). As minorised ethnic groups endeavoured to assert their rights and to defend their identities, their languages assumed a symbolic power (Hamers and Blanc 2000, 324). Traditionally associated with the practice of majority languages, the domain of education has become a target for minority language activists. However, not all parents wish for their children to learn these languages at school, their choice will depend on their own language attitudes. Echoing the viewpoint of Fishman (cf. section 2.2) that education has a limited power, Genesee (2011, 274) argues that unless parents practise the endangered language in the home domain, ‘the language is just another thing that is taught and used at school by their children’. Hence the language beliefs and practices of parents play a crucial role in the language behaviour of the next generation.

4.2.4 What Counts as Bilingual Education?

De Mejía (2002, 32) warns that the formulation of firm definitions of bilingual education ‘seems doomed to failure’, owing to the interdisciplinary nature of this field of study. In the light of this, the aim of this section is not to provide one restrictive definition of what bilingual education is, but to consider a number of definitions in order to aid the development of this chapter and the chapter five case study. As a general rule, bilingual education is accepted as referring to education

programmes where two languages act as the media of instruction at school, that is to say that the languages are employed to teach the content of non-language related subjects, such as mathematics, geography, or history (Cummins 2009, 19). Bilingual education therefore constitutes a specific type of acquisition planning, different to other second-language or foreign-language teaching approaches where the language is taught as a subject (García 2009, 6), regardless of the number of hours devoted to its teaching.

The term ‘bilingual education’ can be employed when more than two languages are employed as the media of instruction (Cummins 2009, 19); this is also labelled multilingual education (Skutnabb-Kangas *et al* 2009, xvii). On the definitions of bilingual education Romaine (1995, 241) argues:

The term ‘bilingual education’ can mean different things in different contexts. If we take a common sense approach and define it as a program where two languages are used equally as media of instruction, many so-called bilingual education programs would not count as such.

Although it may appear to be logical, the requirement for the term ‘bilingual education’ to only refer to the use of the two languages for a strictly equal amount of time in the school timetable is very restrictive. Furthermore, as it will be explained in section 4.3.1, education can be described as being bilingual even when only one language is used as a medium of instruction, if it is the case that the language employed is different to the majority language of a community; although in principle the majority language is not taught at school in these cases, it is accepted that the pupils will become bilingual as it is learnt elsewhere owing to its dominance in other domains. May (2008, 20) contends that school programmes can only be described as providing bilingual education when bilingualism is achieved as the result of instruction, in distinction to monolingual education programmes for pupils who are

already bilingual when they enter school, perhaps as the result of two languages being spoken in the home. Therefore the achievement, or in some cases the maintenance, of bilingualism through instruction in the relevant language or languages should be the aim of an education programme in order to be described as constituting bilingual education.

4.3 The Distribution of Languages in Bilingual Education Programmes

4.3.1 One Language Employed as a Medium of Instruction

Famously implemented in the Canadian province of Quebec to revitalise the French language in the mid-1960s, full immersion education programmes, also referred to as total or one-way immersion, entail pupils being educated in a second language (henceforth L2), a language that is not the predominant language of the community, for all or the main part of their schooling (Day and Shapson 1996, 1). May (2008, 20) states that although the minority language (the language which holds the L position in a diglossic situation) may be used for the most part of the schooling, such programmes may be regarded as being bilingual as the majority language will be employed for teaching at some point and is learnt elsewhere. This method of teaching may be implemented at the beginning of the child's schooling (early immersion) or in subsequent school years (middle/delayed immersion or late immersion). The goal of this learning approach is to provide significant support to a language that is not or is no longer present in other domains, most importantly in the home. Although the establishment of the Canadian immersion programmes was not the first time that children had been educated in a language that was not their first language (henceforth L1), this has become a very well documented case in the literature on bilingual education. Burger *et al* (2011, 124) describe the success of

Canadian immersion programmes as the inspiration for the worldwide establishment of this type of bilingual education programme in recent decades. Tedick *et al* (2011, 5) explain why full immersion programmes have become popular globally:

From Asia to Europe to North America and beyond, immersion programs are proliferating as more communities embrace the promise they hold for developing a bi/multilingual and bi/multicultural citizenry and for revitalizing and/or maintaining autochthonous and indigenous languages.

This signals that the ideology behind immersion programmes is linked to the acceptance and valorisation of different languages and cultures.

Cohen (1976, 65) highlights that the immersion programmes introduced in the 1960s differed from previous language immersion programmes that had forced pupils to abandon their L1 in favour of the majority L2, ‘commonly referred to as the “sink or swim” form of language immersion’. He suggests that the term ‘submersion’, rather than ‘immersion’, better fits this approach (1976, 73). The aim of these programmes is not bilingualism but monolingualism in the L2; this type of programme will be examined further below (cf. section 4.4.2). Baker (2011, 211) explains that ‘[s]ubmersion contains the idea of a language minority student thrown into the deep end and expected to learn to swim as quickly as possible without the help of floats or special swimming lessons.’ In revolutionary France submersion education was seen as a means to transform the language practices of the nation to make a cohesive linguistic whole. Whereas submersion-type programmes mainly cater for minority L1 pupils, it is often the case that the pupils enrolled in immersion programmes have a majority language as their L1 and the aim of this type of schooling is to help them achieve competency in the L2 (Baker 2011, 244). This may be a national language, a foreign language, or a regional or heritage language that is not being passed on outside of the school.

It is important to analyse immersion programmes in their specific historical and political contexts: Genesee (2011, 272) argues that ‘[i]mmersion programs do not exist in a vacuum; they are shaped by multiple forces inside and, importantly, outside the classroom.’ This can be extended to any type of bilingual education programme; it is for this reason that, before moving on to the Alsace case study, it has been necessary to gain an understanding of the broader language policy situation in the region and in France.

4.3.2 Two (or More) Languages Employed as Media of Instruction

Partial immersion bilingual education involves pupils learning content through instruction in two (or more) languages. As with the full immersion model, partial immersion bilingual education may be implemented at the beginning, in the middle, or towards the end of the pupils’ schooling. Furthermore, Johnstone (2006, 24–25) notes that programmes can begin at the pre-school level, where the L1 will be maintained whilst introducing the L2. In partial immersion programmes the model employed can be based on a 50:50 principle, or it may be the case that they are not divided strictly equally. García (2009, 291) argues that the languages do not need to be distributed equally in order to achieve bilingualism, ‘as long as the two languages are respected and given their appropriate value’. Therefore, it is essential that the participants hold positive language beliefs towards both of the languages present if they are to learn and maintain them successfully.

In some bilingual education programmes the class is made up of native speakers of both of the languages that act as the media of instruction. In this case both sets of pupils enter the school as monolinguals, and the aim is that they will exit as bilinguals in both languages. One of the advantages of this type of learning is that

within their class pupils are both ‘novices’ and ‘experts’ which facilitates the language learning of both groups (Christian 1996, 67). There is a range of terms employed to describe this type of programme, including two-way immersion or two-way bilingual education, developmental bilingual education, dual language education, bilingual immersion, double immersion and interlocking education (Baker 2011, 222–23). Cummins (2003, 58) states that this type of bilingual education programme is endorsed by the majority of researchers in the field. The implementation of this type of programme depends on there being a mix of minority and majority language children within a community. Although it is recognised as being advantageous, in a case where significant language shift has already taken place there may not remain many, or indeed any, minority language-speaking children.

In partial immersion programmes instruction is divided between the languages concerned for a certain amount of time in the school week, which can change in the course of the pupils’ school career; García labels this ‘sliding bilingual allocation’ (2009, 290). For example, more hours of instruction may be given in the pupils’ weaker language at the beginning of their schooling, but this might alter so that the languages are eventually allotted equal hours, or more hours may be assigned to the stronger language. However, the instruction may be divided equally between the languages throughout their schooling, the distribution of languages being dependent on the motivations of language-in-education policy-makers.

The curriculum followed in a bilingual education programme is generally the same as that which is followed in monolingual programmes, with the different non-language related subjects being divided between the languages of instruction. Baker (2011, 228) warns that the separation of languages by school subject may not be

neutral, and that if subjects linked to modern progress are taught in one language, and the other language is used for subjects associated with tradition and culture, this can influence the formulation of language attitudes. This underlines the notion that all decisions connected to language acquisition planning are made with certain agendas in mind.

The way that the languages are separated in schools and why this is the case should be considered when examining partial immersion programmes. Thinking about the physical learning environment of the school, the pupils may learn through both languages in the same classroom, or have separate classrooms for each language. The linguistic landscape of bilingual classrooms in Alsace will be examined in chapter five.

One bilingual teacher may teach both languages, or the languages may be strictly separated and taught by two teachers independently. García (2009, 294) states that sometimes both languages are employed in the classroom at the same time, for example by a teacher and a teaching assistant. However, she highlights the significance of who speaks which language:

One disadvantage of this arrangement is that, when there is a minority language, the teacher-aide is often the person who speaks it. Thus, the professional teacher raises the status of the majority language, while the teacher aide [*sic*] further stigmatizes the minority language.

This further underlines the argument that language policy is never neutral, and the way that each of the languages is present in partial immersion programmes has an influence on the language attitudes and practices of the pupils involved.

4.3.2.1 Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

In some cases only one non-language related subject from the school curriculum may be taught through the L2, a process which is referred to as content and language integrated learning (henceforth CLIL). This might be seen as a step between traditional second or foreign language teaching and more extensive partial immersion programmes. In the European context, CLIL programmes have increased in popularity since the 1990s, supported by the European Commission, which states that:

It can provide effective opportunities for pupils to use their new language skills now, rather than learn them now for use later. It opens doors on languages for a broader range of learners, nurturing self-confidence in young learners and those who have not responded well to formal language instruction in general education. It provides exposure to the language without requiring extra time in the curriculum, which can be of particular interest in vocational settings. (European Commission 2003)

Having the support of a prestigious international body such as the European Commission potentially has a strong influence on attitudes towards this type of bilingual education programme.

The benefits of this type of language learning are explained by García (2009, 130): ‘CLIL protects the development of the first language, while exposing students to the second language for a certain time which may start in primary school.’ Going beyond regular L2 learning, CLIL pupils employ the L2 as a tool to learn other academic subjects. CLIL presents an accessible option both for parents and for education authorities who are unsure about the benefits of more extensive programmes such as those highlighted above. Furthermore, as the availability of linguistically capable teachers can be an obstacle to the implementation of immersion bilingual classes, especially those concerning non-official languages (Tedick *et al* 2011, 8), CLIL is an attractive option as it requires fewer teaching staff.

4.4 Models of Bilingual Education

García (2009, 114) describes models as ‘artificial constructs that are divorced from the day-to-day reality of school language use, and the teaching and learning of an additional language’. Nevertheless, models are necessary to build a framework of analysis in a study such as this, but it is important to understand that they are not static constructs when applied to real-life situations. May (2008, 21) states that there are three main models of bilingual education, namely transitional, maintenance and enrichment. He adds that there is also a heritage bilingual education model, in which the aim is to teach languages which often have been forced into a minorised position as the result of language policies promoting the majority language. In the following section the maintenance, enrichment and heritage language models will be grouped together as they share similar aims, and can be described as having an additive approach to language learning, whilst the transitional model has a subtractive approach. There have been other models and theoretical frameworks studied in the literature on bilingual education (see Baker 2011; García 2009). However, it is only necessary to present the four main models named here, as they are most relevant to the models of bilingual education developed in France and the Alsace case study examined in this thesis.

4.4.1 Maintenance, Heritage and Enrichment Bilingual Education Models (Additive Models)

The aim of the maintenance, enrichment, and heritage language bilingual education models can be described as being additive, which García summarises in the following way (Figure 10):

$$L1 + L2 = L1 + L2$$

Figure 10: Additive bilingual education model
Source: García (2009, 52)

This signifies that the L1 and the L2 are employed in education with the intention that both languages will be learned and maintained. In additive programmes the goal is for the pupils to exit the education system as bilinguals; hence, the emphasis is placed on the valorisation of both of the languages involved.

The maintenance model entails a child entering school as a L1 minority language speaker; their schooling will lead to the learning of the L2 whilst maintaining the L1. García (2009, 125) argues that '[m]aintenance programs not only maintain the group's home language while teaching the dominant language, but also instill a strong bicultural identity in children'. The official acceptance of both languages within the school domain will aid in the development of positive language attitudes towards the languages involved.

In heritage language programmes, children are taught through their L1, or the traditional L1 of their ancestors, which has been minorised in society as a result of the promotion of the majority language. This may take place in the region where the language has been traditionally spoken, or it could also apply to migrant communities settling in a new country. Similar to the maintenance programmes, the emphasis is on the retention of the L1 and the acquisition of the L2. May (2008, 23) states that heritage language pupils are divided between minority and majority L1 speakers, but he notes that, as the result of language shift away from heritage languages, the balance is tipping towards more majority language pupils.

In the enrichment model the child again enters the school with one language and goes on to acquire another language at school. The enrichment bilingual

education model is similar to the maintenance model, as it focuses on the learning and retention of both languages. However, the enrichment further encourages the development of the first language (De Mejía 2002, 44). May (2008, 22) notes that maintenance programmes are generally aimed at minority L1 pupils learning a majority L2 at school, whilst enrichment programmes usually entail majority L1 pupils learning a minority L2.

The three additive models presented here are described by Baker (2011, 222) as ‘‘[s]trong’ forms of bilingual education [which] have bilingualism, biliteracy and biculturalism as intended outcomes’ (original emphasis). The labels ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ are not neutral, and can be seen to suggest that strong forms are desirable, whilst the weak forms are not. Nevertheless, they are useful terms to categorise the goals of bilingual education programmes, and they will be employed in this thesis, without the inference that one type of programme is right and one is wrong. The models are summarised in a table following the discussion of the transitional bilingual education model (Figure 12). However, it is remembered that models often do not fit real life situations neatly.

4.4.2 Transitional Bilingual Education Model (Subtractive Model)

In the subtractive model, the child will enter school speaking one language and acquire another language at school through L2 instruction with the goal that this will eventually replace the L1, or force it into a minorised position. Therefore, as monolingualism in the L2 is the ultimate aim of this education model, it can be described as constituting a ‘weak’ form of bilingual education (Baker 2011), with bilingualism being employed and tolerated only as a means to achieve

monolingualism. The aim of this kind of bilingual education programme is summarised by García in the following way (Figure 11):

$$\mathbf{L1 + L2 - L1 \rightarrow L2}$$

Figure 11: Subtractive bilingual education model
Source García (2009, 51)

Therefore, in this type of model, the L1 and the L2 are both employed for a time at school until the L1 is subtracted to leave only the L2.

De Mejía (2002, 40) comments that subtractive bilingualism not only aims to replace the pupils' first language, but also to undermine it, which influences the language attitudes and language practices of the L1 speakers. This occurs when there is language conflict, and contradicts what Crystal (2002, 81) labels 'healthy bilingualism'. He explains: 'Healthy bilingualism is a state in which two languages are seen as complementary, not in competition— fulfilling different roles, with each language being seen in a rewarding light.' In a society whose schools aim for subtractive bilingualism, the languages present are not seen as complementing each other; rather one is seen as undesirable, whereas the other is valued. Paradoxically, Baker (2011, 216) notes that, although the goal is for the pupils to become monolingual, the teaching personnel will necessarily be bilingual; however, to pupils they will promote the transition to the majority language.

Skutnabb-Kangas (2008, 108) explains that transitional models impinge upon the linguistic rights of minority groups:

Schools often see the mother tongues of minorities as necessary but negative temporary tools while the minority child is learning a dominant language. As soon as he or she is deemed in some way competent in the dominant language, the mother tongue can be left behind, and the child has no right to maintain it and develop it further in the educational system.

In this situation language-in-education policy-makers are imposing the language that they believe to be the most appropriate or valuable in society. Bilingualism, or at least bilingualism involving certain languages or language varieties, is regarded as undesirable in a subtractive or ‘weak’ bilingual education programme. But that is not to say that bilingualism involving languages considered to be more prestigious would not be welcomed.

Bilingual education model	Aim of the model’s language-in-education policy
Maintenance Heritage Enrichment	Pupils exit programme bilingual in the L1 with which they entered the programme and the L2 acquired at school. i.e. L1 + L2 = L1 + L2 (additive / ‘strong’ form of bilingual education)
Transitional	Pupils replace the minority L1 with which they enter the programme with the majority L2 i.e. L1 + L2 = L2 (subtractive / ‘weak’ form of bilingual education)

Figure 12: Summary of the main bilingual education models discussed

4.5 The Role of Teachers in Bilingual Education Programmes

McColl Millar (2005, 96) recognises the pivotal role of ministries of education in regard to language planning, but he highlights that ‘teachers and other educators affect language planning at the level of the “chalk face”’. That is to say that teachers control what actually happens in the classroom, whereas language-in-education policy-makers state only what should happen. Baker (2011, 309) underlines the important role of teachers, and particularly bilingual education teachers, as policy-

makers: 'In schools and classrooms, there are myriad decisions to make daily, hourly, second by second. Bilingual classrooms and schools add a language dimension to such decision-making.' Teachers are described as 'the final arbiters of language policy implementation' by Menken and García (2010, 1), who also suggest that: 'As such, policies often have different results from those intended by policymakers.' Therefore the role of teachers in bilingual education programmes should not be overlooked or underestimated. Lo Bianco (2010, 166) explains that it is not the case that teachers can simply impose language practices on their pupils: 'Instead, teacher talk contains persuasion and rhetoric as well as making and limiting choices in what students are encouraged to say and write.' This highlights the non-neutral nature of teacher language and reiterates the power of the teacher in guiding pupils.

As 'servants of the system' (Shohamy 2006, 79), however, teachers are to some extent obliged to follow the policies set out by language-in-education policymakers at the macro level. The freedom of teachers to exert their own language policies may depend on guidelines set out either implicitly or explicitly by their employers. As teachers are required to prepare their pupils for assessments throughout their school career, they need to ensure that their pupils acquire the language skills necessary to succeed, which may limit their freedom to implement their own policies in the classroom.

Depending on the organisation within a particular school, bilingual teachers may use both languages in class. If a bilingual speaker employs both languages seamlessly within a conversation, this is referred to as code-switching (Trudgill 2000, 105–06). Baker (2011, 287) notes that when teaching younger children, teachers will most probably code-switch to suit the needs of their pupils. As their

pupils become more linguistically competent, the teacher's code-switching may be used for a different purpose and have an influence on the language attitudes of the class if they generally switch to one code for certain exchanges. In some bilingual education programmes, a model of one teacher– one language is strictly followed. García (2009, 301) views code-switching as advantageous: 'responsible code-switching is an instrument to develop students' metalinguistic understandings and metacognitive awareness, important for today's bilingually educated individuals.' Moreover, Trudgill (2000, 106) notes that by code-switching bilingual speakers communicate the dual aspect of their identity; if a teacher does this, then it encourages pupils to do the same.

Referring to transitional/subtractive bilingual programmes, Baker (2011, 216) indicates that the languages spoken by the teaching staff and the personnel throughout the school carry 'a hidden message' which can influence the language behaviour of the pupils. As an example, he states that those in a position of power, such as head teachers, will probably speak the majority language, whilst the minority language may be spoken by those with the least power with the school, such as cleaners and workers employed to serve meals and supervise the pupils at lunchtime (2011, 216). Although an analysis of bilingual education programmes may focus primarily on what happens within the classroom, it is important to consider the broader context of the school, and all of the interactions that take place throughout the school day.

McColl Millar (2005, 96) contends that the linguistic behaviour of teachers can have a strong influence with regard to minority languages:

No one should underestimate the power of linguistic prejudice on the part of schoolteachers (who have often had the same prejudices enforced upon them by *their*

teachers); particularly in threatened, lesser-used, language situations. More positively, committed teachers are at the heart of any 'ethnic' revival.

Considering their pivotal role as language policy agents, the language attitudes and practices of teachers in bilingual education programmes in Alsace will be a particularly important consideration in the chapter five case study. The literacy practices of teachers are also significant in shaping the language beliefs of their pupils. Lo Bianco (2010, 166) argues that:

[...] the literacy and literate practices of the teacher and what the teacher promotes and validates as acceptable literacy practice from the students, involve teachers implementing written language norms and standards in a similar way to those teachers implement for spoken language.

Therefore, the language that the teacher employs to write on the board, on classroom displays, in the exercise books of pupils, and so on, is significant. Furthermore, this is also the case for the way that the teacher responds to any writing carried out by the pupils.

4.6 Arguments For and Against Bilingual Education

Having introduced the main concepts and issues related to bilingual education, this chapter will move on to consider the main arguments in favour of and against this form of schooling. The rise in the number of bilingual education programmes suggests an increase in favourable attitudes towards this type of schooling. However, traditionally there has been a significant level of scepticism and criticism towards it. Baker (2011, 140) states that until the 1960s many researchers believed that bilingualism had a detrimental effect on the individual's thought process. He underlines some of the claims that have been cited by critics (2011, 139): 'Predicted problems range from bilingualism as a burden on the brain, mental confusion,

slowing down of the acquisition of the majority language, identity conflicts, split loyalties, alienation, and even schizophrenia.’ However, he suggests (2011, 201) that ‘Bilingual education, when effectively implemented, is not the cause of underachievement; rather it is the **cure**’ (original emphasis). As an example, this may be the case when minority L1 pupils are permitted to learn through their mother tongue as well as the L2: Skutnabb-Kangas (2008, 114) states that a number of studies have shown that minority language pupils progress better the longer that they are permitted to learn through their L1. Furthermore, Cummins (2003, 64) argues that when children are forced to reject their mother tongue, and therefore a part of their identity, this can have a negative impact on their participation in class. In recent years, researchers have dismissed the claims that bilinguals are disadvantaged cognitively (Cummins 2009, 20; Baker 2011, 161). Cummins (2009, 34) argues that:

The debate among researchers and academics about the scientific legitimacy of bilingual education is finished, although there is still much to be discussed and investigated regarding optimal models and practices under different socio-political and sociolinguistic conditions.

This is not to say that negative attitudes towards bilingual education no longer exist. However, the focus of the literature in the field has shifted towards the way in which bilingual education is implemented, and why. Baker (2011, 408) suggests that opinions towards bilingualism and bilingual education programmes depend on the language attitudes of the wider society. He contends that if language is regarded as a problem, bilingual education is more likely to be discouraged, whereas if language is viewed as a resource, it will be encouraged.

Going beyond the effects of bilingual education on the cognition of individuals, García (2009, 6) argues that ‘[m]ore than anything else, bilingual

education is a way of providing *meaningful and equitable education*, as well as an education that builds tolerance towards other linguistic and cultural groups' (original emphasis). This relies upon the goal of the bilingual education programme being additive. García suggests that bilingual education can be a positive influence in the lives of participants who live in multilingual and multicultural societies; yet, as it has been explained above, bilingual education is not always implemented for this purpose.

4.7 Bilingual Education Programmes in France

4.7.1 The School System in France

Founded on the five main principles of freedom of teaching, free education, neutrality, secularity and obligatory education (Ministère de l'Éducation nationale 2011a), the French school system has been delivering free, compulsory education via the standard French language since the Ferry laws of the 1880s. Before examining the development of French bilingual education programmes in this section, and moving on to the Alsace case study in chapter five, it is useful to outline briefly the organisation of the school system in France (Figure 13). In summary, most children enter an *école maternelle* from the age of three and move up to an *école élémentaire* at the age of six until they complete their primary education at eleven.⁶⁵ Pupils then attend a *collège* for four years, and afterwards they attend a *lycée* until the age of eighteen. As there are no exact equivalents in English, henceforth the French school names will be employed in this thesis.

⁶⁵ The attendance of an *école maternelle* is not compulsory. However, the Ministère de l'Éducation nationale (2012e) states that 'almost all' children in France attend an *école maternelle* from the age of three.

Age	Institution	School year	Education level
3–4	<i>École maternelle</i>	<i>Petite section</i>	Primary
4–5		<i>Moyenne section</i>	
5–6		<i>Grande section</i>	
6–7	<i>École élémentaire</i>	<i>Cours préparatoire</i>	
7–8		<i>Cours élémentaire 1</i>	
8–9		<i>Cours élémentaire 2</i>	
9–10		<i>Cours moyen 1</i>	
10–11		<i>Cours moyen 2</i>	
11–12	<i>Collège</i>	<i>Sixième</i>	Secondary
12–13		<i>Cinquième</i>	
13–14		<i>Quatrième</i>	
14–15		<i>Troisième</i>	
15–16	<i>Lycée</i>	<i>Seconde</i>	
16–17		<i>Première</i>	
17–18		<i>Terminale</i>	

Figure 13: The structure of the school system in France

4.7.2 The Development of Bilingual Education Programmes in France

Although France has consciously promoted monolingualism, bilingual education has been in existence there for many centuries, as Duverger highlights, recalling the teaching of royal and noble children in more than one language (2005, 19).

Traditionally, bilingual education in France was the preserve of the elite, and only languages deemed to be prestigious were employed. As a general rule, the use of other languages, including the once widely spoken RLs, has not been accepted in an educational setting. Wright (2004, 62) notes that there was an exception made in the early years of the Revolution ‘to provide a transition to French in the non-French speaking areas’; therefore a subtractive, transitional bilingual model was planned whereby the monolingual RL speaker would become bilingual in the RL and French after which time the RL would be marginalised (a table summarising the main bilingual education models and examples in the context of France will follow at the end of section 4.7.2.2). As the Revolution progressed, officials decided that a French-only policy should be imposed, entailing a submersion-type model of bilingual education. However, owing to a lack of resources at the beginning of the nineteenth century (cf. section 2.3.3), Wright (2004, 63) comments that ‘[i]n reality, education, whether bilingual or monolingual, remained a pipe dream’.

In spite of the presence and the recent recognition of multilingualism in France, McColl Millar (2005, 24) states that standard French continues to be prioritised above all other languages and, furthermore, he argues that bilingualism remains an undesirable attribute for many Frenchmen: ‘Even those who are bidialectal, or bilingual, are considered to be in some way *unrepublican* by many of their fellow citizens’ (original emphasis). This suggests that the notion of the monolingual State continues to be coveted more than two centuries after the

Revolution, whilst prejudices against the use of other languages and varieties of language persist.

The prioritisation of the French language in the Constitution suggests that official language policy remains embedded in a monolingual ideology, although the RLs have enjoyed some official recognition and support since the mid-twentieth century. Considering the history of French language policy, the development of additive bilingual education programmes in public education has not been without a certain number of challenges. For many decades following the implementation of the Ferry education laws, if teaching via a language other than French had been permitted in public schooling, usually as a temporary measure, the bilingual education model followed was subtractive, with the aim being transition rather than maintenance or development.

4.7.2.1 RL Private Bilingual Schools

As highlighted above (cf. section 2.3.7), the 1951 Deixonne law introduced the optional teaching of Basque, Breton, Catalan and Occitan, and the legislation was later expanded to cover more RLs of metropolitan France and its overseas departments and regions (*DOM-ROMs*). This legislation was significant as it created an official role for the RLs at school for the first time. However, it offered very limited opportunities for their maintenance and development. Bilingual RL programmes were first established in the private sector in the Basque-speaking area of France in 1969, and have spread to other corners of the Hexagon as the result of bottom-up movements led by parents and RL activists concerned by the language shift away from the RLs.

Operated by the Seaska group, Basque private bilingual education schools are known as *ikastolas*, the name that is also used for Basque-medium schools in the Basque Country in Spain. There are currently twenty-nine *ikastolas* in operation in south western France; twenty-five primary schools, three *collèges* and one *lycée* (Seaska 2012). Similar schools, named *bressolas* (*bressola* being the Catalan word for ‘cradle’), were established in the Catalan-speaking area of southern France for the promotion of Catalan in 1976; currently there are seven primary schools and one *collège* in operation (Bressola 2012a). One year later, in 1977, Breton bilingual education was introduced in Brittany by the Diwan network (the word *diwan* translates from Breton as ‘sprout’). Today there are forty-one Diwan schools, including six *collèges* and one *lycée* (Diwan 2012). In the south of France, Occitan bilingual schools, known as *calandretas*, were first opened in 1979 and today total fifty-three primary schools and two *collèges* (Calandreta 2012). Lastly, a network of private RL bilingual schools was founded in Alsace in 1991, by the group ABCM *Zweisprachigkeit*.⁶⁶ Currently it operates eight primary schools in Alsace and two in the neighbouring Moselle *département* of Lorraine. A full analysis of the ABCM *Zweisprachigkeit* school network will follow below. The Seaska, Bressola, Calandreta, Diwan and ABCM *Zweisprachigkeit* schools are all termed associative schools (*écoles associatives*). They fall into the category of additive, heritage language bilingual education discussed above. Unlike other schools offering private education, in some cases parents do not pay any inscription fees, or, when they are required to, such fees are relatively modest. As associative schools are not funded by the State, they often rely on help from parents and on fundraising to maintain the

⁶⁶ As explained above (cf. section 3.8.1), the name of the school network is made up of the acronym of French words *Association pour le bilinguisme dès la classe de maternelle* (Association for bilingualism from pre-school), coupled with the German word for bilingualism, *Zweisprachigkeit*.

schools. Therefore, these schools should not be considered to provide an elite form of education for children from financially privileged backgrounds, unlike other examples of private schooling. These bilingual education programmes are open to children of all linguistic and ethnic backgrounds, although it may not be possible for non RL-speaking children to join such programmes after the first year, as they will not be able to follow the instructions in class.

The Basque, Catalan, Occitan and Breton associative schools follow a model of full immersion in the RL, whilst the associative schools in Alsace follow a partial immersion model, the reasons for which will be discussed in the following chapter. Therefore they all provide a form of additive or ‘strong’ bilingual education, as the aim is that the pupils will exit the school system bilingual in both the RL and French. On the goals of immersion education in the RLs, Sibille (2000, 66–67) comments:

This method aims to make up for the imbalance between French and the regional language in one’s social, and often family, life. Children leaving such programmes are perfectly bilingual and statistics show that their school results are more often than not better than the average.⁶⁷

Whether pupils do leave the schools as ‘perfect’ bilinguals is debatable, but one can see here that it is the aim of this kind of education programme to offer significant support in the RL that goes beyond regular language teaching.

The associative schools are recognised by the State and they are inspected as any other public school, yet they cannot be included in the public system. In 2001 and 2002 Jack Lang, at that time the *ministre de l’Éducation nationale* (Minister of National Education), made a number of efforts to integrate the Diwan schools into

⁶⁷ ‘Cette méthode vise à rattraper le déséquilibre entre français et langue régionale dans la vie sociale et, souvent, familiale. Les enfants sortant de telles filières sont parfaitement bilingues et les statistiques montrent que leurs résultats scolaires sont plutôt meilleurs que la moyenne’ (Sibille 2000, 66).

the public system. However, the Conseil d'État (Council of State) declared that immersion RL education is unconstitutional, on the grounds that the RL is privileged over French in terms of hours in the school week, which contradicts Article 2 of the Constitution (Hélot 2003, 263). Although the immersion schools had been in operation for some time and had gained a degree of official acceptance, on the constitutional amendment Judge (2007, 135) comments that: 'as far as the immersion schools were concerned, it placed them outside the state system for years to come.' Oakes (2011a, 57) contends that the immersion schools could have developed further had they been integrated into the public school system and received funding from the State.

Unlike public schools, associative schools employ their own teachers who are deemed capable of fulfilling the specific language policies of the schools. When new teachers are employed, the associative school network in question provides them with further training to expand upon their existing teaching qualifications in order to equip them to work in its schools. Associative schools are either under contract (*sous contrat*) or out of contract (*hors contrat*) with the State, depending on their agreement to follow certain guidelines. School teachers that are *sous contrat* have their salaries paid for by the State. Created in 1997, the ISLRF (Institut supérieur des langues de la République française) situated in the town of Béziers in the south of France, provides further training for associative school RL teachers (Sibille 2000, 73). Furthermore, it organises conferences on the issues involved in the subject of bilingual education. The ISLRF explains that the associative schools are drawn together via the organisation by their practice of immersion education and the oppression of their languages by the French State 'on behalf of its legal, constitutional apparatus and consequently the institutions of the Republic' (ISLRF

2003; note from the president of the ISLRF).⁶⁸ Hence, the ISLRF forms a network of support and communication for the associative schools.

Judge (2007, 129) highlights the impact of the associative schools in the efforts to revitalise the RLs of France: “‘Immersion schools’ symbolise the RLs’ great fightback. They were the Trojan horse which first introduced RLs into the educational system in a meaningful way.’ The emphasis on introducing them in a meaningful way is significant; whereas in the past the RLs were associated with shame (if they were included at school at all) and the goal was to subtract them from the pupils’ language practices, the aim of the associative schools is maintenance and enrichment, and both the RLs and the French language are valued.

The RLs are also taught in denominational private bilingual schools, particularly Catholic schools, which Judge (2007, 132) describes as unsurprising, owing to the fact that in some areas the catechism has traditionally been taught in RLs. These bilingual schools will not be examined further here or in chapter five, as there is little information published about them, and they are responsible for the education of only a very small proportion of pupils in Alsace (Judge 2007, 133).

4.7.2.2 Public Bilingual Education Programmes

In 1982 and 1983 the education bills that came to be known as the *circulaires Savary*, named after the *ministre de l’Éducation nationale* at the time, Alain Savary, made significant provision for the teaching of the RLs and made the creation of RL bilingual education programmes possible for the first time. Hélot (2008, 213) observes that the French State has been reluctant to introduce bilingual education as it could create a notion of elitism, which contravenes the founding principles of the

⁶⁸ ‘Nous vivons pour nos langues une même situation d’oppression de la part de l’Etat français de son appareil juridique, constitutionnel et conséquemment des institutions de la République’ (ISLRF 2003).

education system. To overcome this, she explains that bilingual classes take place alongside monolingual classes in mixed schools; therefore in the public school system the term *section bilingue* is commonly used rather than *école bilingue*. Furthermore, RL bilingual education must be offered only on an optional basis in line with the republican value of equality (Oakes 2011a, 63). Public bilingual education programmes were first established for the Basque RL, with a single bilingual section opening in 1983 (Lefort 2005, 5). Teaching can only take place in the RL for up to fifty percent of the school week in public school bilingual sections. Hélot (2008, 207) explains that '[t]otal immersion in the regional language is seen not as giving enough learning space to the French language'. Judge (2007, 132) highlights the difference in the approach to bilingual education compared to the associative system: 'A slight advantage was given to French in these schools: teaching in Basque only starting in the second year of kindergarten. Learning to read is also first in French and then in the RL.' Although both the private and public schools follow an additive, 'strong', bilingual education model, in the associative system the advantage is given to the RL as French is dominant in most other domains, whilst in public schools one could argue that there remains the tendency to privilege French. Since the establishment of the Basque bilingual schools, many other RL bilingual programmes have been introduced in the public school system, going beyond the languages offered by the associative schools. They include Corsican and Gallo, and also Creole, Tahitian and the Melanesian languages, which are spoken in the *DOM-ROMs* (Ministère de l'Éducation nationale 2009).

Although it is available in private schools, immersion and equal partial immersion bilingual education is not available in the public school system in foreign languages or languages brought to France as a result of immigration. Hélot (2003,

261) states that one of the main reasons why this is not offered is that it is feared that many parents would choose English programmes, which would be counterproductive to the efforts of French language policy-makers to halt the hegemony of the English language (cf. section 2.3.9). Hélot (2008, 213) again suggests that the Ministère de l'Éducation nationale (Ministry of National Education) is reluctant to introduce full bilingual schools due to a fear that it could create a sense of elitism, which would contradict the Republic's founding principle of equality. However, CLIL programmes, provided in international, European and oriental sections, have been introduced since the 1980s and they have steadily grown in popularity. Hélot (2003, 265) describes CLIL in foreign languages as being regarded by French education authorities as an alternative to immersion programmes, which, as highlighted above, are not deemed to be acceptable by the State.

Bilingual education model	Aim of the model's language-in-education policy	Example of this type of model in the context of France
Maintenance Heritage Enrichment	<p>Pupils exit programme bilingual in the L1 with which they entered the programme and the L2 acquired at school</p> <p>i.e. L1 + L2 = L1 + L2</p> <p>(additive / 'strong' form of bilingual education)</p>	<p>Pupils enter RL bilingual education programme as a minority or majority L1 (i.e. RL or French) speaker and acquire the minority or majority L2 (i.e. RL or French) at school whilst maintaining their L1</p> <p>Pupils enter RL bilingual education programme as a majority L1 (i.e. French) speaker and acquire the minority L2 (i.e. RL) at school whilst continuing to develop competence in the L1</p>
Transitional	<p>Pupils replace the minority L1 with which they enter the programme with the majority L2</p> <p>i.e. L1 + L2 = L2</p> <p>(subtractive / 'weak' form of bilingual education)</p>	<p>Post-Revolution language-in-education policy aimed to discourage the practice of the RLs in favour of the French language</p>

Figure 14: Summary of the main bilingual education models and examples in the context of France

4.7.2.3 International, European and Oriental Sections

International sections were first introduced in France in 1981. In primary schools three hours per week are taught in a foreign language, increasing to six hours per week in *collèges* and *lycées*. These sections are made up of pupils who have French

as their L1 and pupils who have the foreign language as their L1, thus they fall into the dual language model explained above (cf. section 4.3.2). The Ministère de l'Éducation nationale states that these programmes are designed to improve the language skills of both foreign pupils in French and French pupils in a foreign language (Ministère de l'Éducation nationale 2012a). The international sections currently available are German, American, English, Arabic, Chinese, Danish, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Dutch, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese and Swedish (Ministère de l'Éducation nationale 2012a, 2012b, 2012c). Hélot (2003, 264) describes international sections as being aimed at privileged children whose L1 is a dominant European language.

Founded in 1992, CLIL programmes are also available in European and Oriental sections. The languages taught in European sections are German, English, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese and Russian, and in the Oriental sections Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese are offered (Ministère de l'Éducation nationale 2011b). In *collèges* the selected language is taught for two extra hours compared to the teaching of other foreign languages; in *lycées* one or more non-linguistic subjects are taught through the language. If pupils succeed in the part of the examination relating to the relevant language, this is noted on their *Baccalauréat*, the certificate awarded at the end of secondary schooling.

For the German, Italian and Spanish languages, binational sections are now available in *lycées* (Ministère de l'Éducation nationale 2010). Instead of a Baccalauréat, the pupils in these programmes work towards achieving an Abibac (combining the German Abitur and the Baccalauréat), Esabac (a combination of the Italian Esame di Stato and the Baccalauréat) or Bachibac (combining the Spanish Bachillerato and Baccalauréat). Unlike the RL programmes, where RL bilingual

education is available only in the geographical area where the RL traditionally has been spoken, these programmes can be introduced anywhere. As will be discussed in chapter five, an exception to the rule is the case of German, which is taught in Alsace as an RL, but in the rest of France as a foreign European language.

Hélot and Young state that, because pupils are assessed in order to enter these programmes, they can be considered elitist: ‘This means that only high achievers can avail themselves of bilingual education’ (2006, 75). Furthermore, the languages involved are often prestigious and only the standard varieties of the languages are present. Therefore the CLIL programmes described can be labelled as being exclusionary, both in terms of their participants and the languages and language varieties involved.

4.8 The Development of Bilingual Education Programmes in Alsace

Following on from an introduction to the field of bilingual education and the implementation of bilingual education programmes in France, the focus here turns to the development of RL bilingual education in the region of Alsace. This will provide some essential background information to develop the case study on current language policy in Alsatian bilingual primary school classrooms that forms the next chapter. In the previous sections of this chapter, it has been demonstrated that bilingual education programmes across the world are implemented in a variety of manners, with varying aims and as the result of a range of different language ideologies. Furthermore, the complexity of the development of bilingual education in France, a state which vigorously promotes French as its principal language, has also been examined. Nevertheless, the RLs of France today find themselves in a strong position in the education system in comparison with times in the past, from the Revolution

onwards, when their presence was not only discouraged, but explicitly forbidden. Considering this, along with the complicated sociolinguistic background of the region of Alsace outlined in chapter three, the development of bilingual education programmes in Alsace is particularly pertinent to wider debates.

The singular nature of the Alsatian RL has been highlighted above (cf. sections 3.8.1 and 3.9). The RL is acknowledged widely as comprising of two elements: the Alemannic and Frankish language varieties (referred to in this thesis as Alsatian) in its oral form, and standard German in its written form. This linguistic situation fits the model proposed by Kloss and McConnell (1974, 33) in which standard German traditionally had acted as a roofing language (*dachsprache*) that can be said to have ‘overlaid’ and ‘shielded’ Alsatian. Since the domination of French as the standard language in the region since the mid-twentieth century, which replaced standard German in a number of domains, Alsatian has existed in the region as a ‘roofless’ language variety.

Like many of the other RLs of France, use of the RL in both of its forms expands beyond national borders, however the role of standard German is unique as it is a major international language, with many millions of speakers in Europe and all around the world (cf. section 3.8.10). Schwengler (2000, 67) contends that the dual definition of the Alsatian RL is more problematic than the other RLs of France, as the connection between the name of the RL and name of the region with which it is associated is not straightforward. Whereas Breton (*le breton*) conveniently equates with Brittany (*la Bretagne*), Corsican (*le corse*) with Corsica (*la Corse*) and so on, in Alsace a range of terms is used to describe the RL. Whilst Alsatian (*l’alsacien*) is apparent in its connection to Alsace, the labels Frankish and Alemannic dialects are

also employed, as well as German (*l'allemand*), which evokes an association with Germany (*l'Allemagne*), even though it is spoken in many other areas outside of that country.

The Savary education bills of the early 1980s facilitated the creation of public school RL bilingual sections in France (cf. section 2.3.11), yet Schwengler (2000, 13) notes that this did not lead to an immediate demand for this type of programme in Alsace, neither from parents nor from associations in favour of bilingualism. Standard German had been taught widely as a foreign language in Alsace since the Holderith education reforms of the 1970s (cf. section 3.8.1). Moreover, Alsatian had never been taught at school since the introduction of compulsory education, rather it had been passed on orally from generation to generation, but by the 1980s a language shift towards French as the main or the only language of the home had been firmly established. As it has been highlighted above (cf. section 3.8.1), in his role as Chief Education Officer for Alsace (1981–91) Pierre Deyon published a number of education bills concerning the teaching of the RL, in which it was defined as comprising of standard German and the traditionally spoken language varieties. This paved the way for German to be considered for inclusion in an extensive bilingual education programme offered by the State, which would not be possible in other regions where it has the status of a foreign language. In an education bill from 20 September 1991, Deyon's successor between 1991 and 1997, Jean-Paul de Gaudemar, describes the particular status of German in Alsace in the following way:

German presents, in effect, from an educational viewpoint, the triple virtue of being simultaneously the written expression and the language of reference of the regional

dialects, the language of our closest neighbouring countries and a major European and international language. (Translated from De Gaudemar 1999, 186)⁶⁹

The triple status of German as a regional, neighbour and international language places it in a very strong position in Alsace, and its learning is an attractive proposition to both language-in-education policy-makers and parents. Hélot (2008, 208) states that the case of Alsace demonstrates how national language policies can be interpreted at a local level to provide an educational programme that would not be available in other areas of France, namely equal immersion bilingual education in a foreign language. She argues that the policy followed in Alsace is favoured by the Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, which has aims to diversify foreign language learning and to promote the learning of German across France (2008, 209). This exemplifies the notion that language-in-education policy is not a neutral pursuit; there are many factors that shape its development at the macro, meso and micro levels.

Hélot (2008, 208) describes the language policy of RL teaching in Alsace as paradoxical, as standard German traditionally has not been spoken by Alsatians and the majority of the region's children will not have the opportunity to hear this language spoken in the home domain. Furthermore, she suggests that this language-in-education policy could accelerate the decline of Alsatian (2008, 209), as German occupies the space that Alsatian could fill at school. Therefore, it can be argued that the language variety is being further minorised in spite of the progress that has been made for RLs in the education system in France. However, many people view the

⁶⁹ 'L'allemand présente, en effet, du point de vue éducatif, la triple vert d'être à la fois l'expression écrite et la langue de référence des dialectes régionaux, la langue des pays des plus voisins et une grande langue de diffusion européenne et internationale' (De Gaudemar quoted in De Gaudemar 1999, 186).

teaching of German as necessary in order to revitalise Alsatian; Huck *et al* (2007, 77) suggest that '[t]he Alsatian dialect needs German to strengthen itself, to acquire new words or to express new realities'.⁷⁰ Although the learning of German could be beneficial to the maintenance of Alsatian where it is already spoken, in cases where this complementarity does not exist, it is unclear whether the acquisition of standard German will encourage an interest in Alsatian.

Bister-Broosen and Willemyns (1998, 8) highlight that following a 'Treaty of Friendship' between France and the Federal Republic of Germany, a project was launched in 1986 to learn the neighbour language in each country. The labelling of German as a 'neighbour language' in Alsace (*la langue du voisin*) has been employed widely in recent years. This term acts as a means to differentiate the status of German from other languages, and could be said to bridge the gap between the labels 'regional language' and 'foreign language'. The close proximity of neighbouring German-speaking countries encourages school trips and exchanges, and families can access these areas themselves with relative ease by car or public transport. As such, the concept of a neighbour language is very tangible in Alsace.

4.8.1 ABCM Zweisprachigkeit Bilingual Schools

Although the ABCM Zweisprachigkeit (henceforth ABCM) private bilingual primary schools are outnumbered considerably by bilingual education sections offered in the public school system, they will be presented here first as they were established before the public sections. According to Huck *et al* (2007, 71), the first significant calls from parents for bilingual education in Alsace came several years after the publication of the Savary education bills, in 1989. Owing to the

⁷⁰ 'Le dialecte a besoin de l'allemand pour se ressourcer, pour acquérir des mots nouveaux ou pour dire des réalités nouvelles' (Huck *et al* 2007, 77).

unavailability of bilingual education programmes in the public school system, in 1990 the ABCM association was founded to meet a demand from parents throughout the region for such programmes (Bister-Broosen 2002, 106). As it has been explained above, the ABCM schools fall under the category of ‘associative schools’ in France (cf. sections 2.3.11 and 4.7.2.1), alongside the Diwan (Breton), Seaska (Basque), Bressola (Catalan) and Calandreta (Occitan) schools. These schools fall into the 4b category in Fishman’s GIDS (schools funded and staffed by the Xish community), although some of the teachers in the ABCM schools have been paid by the State (i.e. the Yish community) since an agreement in 1997 (Rudio 2007, 66).

Money was granted from the Council of the European Economic Community to aid the opening of the schools (Schwengler 2000, 19–20); they continue to be supported financially by the General and Regional Councils (Rudio 2007, 66–67). The first ABCM primary school classes were founded in five locations in 1991 (ABCM Zweisprachigkeit 2012a). In total, today there are eight ABCM primary school sites in Alsace, and two further schools in the closely neighbouring Moselle *département*, which were opened in 1997. The majority of the schools offer an education programme that covers the entirety of the pupils’ primary school career, although three sites (situated in Strasbourg and Saverne in the Bas-Rhin *département* and Lutterbach in the Haut-Rhin *département*) currently offer only an *école maternelle*.

The language policy initially followed by the ABCM classes was equal immersion in French and standard German. In an interview undertaken in the year that the first classes were opened, Richard Weiss, the founding president of the

association, explains why the schools chose standard German over Alsatian as the language of instruction:

German is one of the aspects of the regional language, the other is the dialect. This division is normal, it is found in particular throughout the germanophone area. [...] In our meetings, the vast majority of parents want their children to learn German and not the dialect, which has always been the case here until 1939.⁷¹ (*Land un Sproch* 1991, 5)

However, Weiss states that all teachers in the ABCM schools are themselves bilingual and that they respect the children's 'dialectal expression' (*Land un Sproch* 1991, 6).⁷² This reveals that the inclusion of Alsatian in the ABCM schools has been possible since their introduction, but it has found itself in a minorised position in comparison with standard German. Originally half of the school week was spent learning through French and half through German, which equated to thirteen hours in each language until 2008. After this time it would equate to twelve hours in each language per week when the total number of teaching hours in primary education was reduced from twenty-six hours to twenty-four hours across France.

Since 2004, Alsatian has been employed for at least one half day per week in the ABCM *écoles maternelles*, and in some schools it is used for more than a half day; furthermore, classroom assistants are requested to speak Alsatian and pre-school classes are carried out in it (ABCM Zweisprachigkeit 2005). This represents an important development for Alsatian; traditionally associated with being a language of the home, its use in a key language domain raises its prestige and can foster positive language beliefs. In ABCM *écoles élémentaires* there are no set teaching hours in

⁷¹ 'L'allemand est un des versants de la langue régionale, l'autre le dialecte. Cette division est normale, on la trouve notamment dans tout le domaine germanophone. [...] Dans nos réunions, une très grande majorité des parents veut que leur(s) enfant(s) apprenne(nt) l'allemand et non le dialecte. Ce qui a toujours été le cas chez nous jusqu'en 1939' (*Land un Sproch* 1991, 5).

⁷² 'Il est évident que toutes [les institutrices] sont bilingues et respectent, par ailleurs, l'expression dialectale des enfants' (*Land un Sproch* 1991, 6).

Alsatian; the main part of the teaching taking place in French and German. However, the association states that a number of activities, including sport and singing, are carried out in Alsatian (ABCM Zweisprachigkeit 2005). In Article 2 of the association's statutes, it describes its aim as being bilingualism in French and the RL of Alsace and Moselle, which it clarifies as referring to 'German both in its standard form and its dialectal forms (Frankish and Alemannic dialects of the region)' (ABCM Zweisprachigkeit 2005).⁷³ The continued official presence of Alsatian in some form alongside French and German throughout the ABCM primary school programme undoubtedly is significant; the extent to which this can have a positive effect on the survival of this language variety will be discussed in section 4.8.3 and in the chapter six conclusions.

A principle of partial immersion has been adopted in the ABCM schools, unlike the other associative schools in France that favour full immersion, particularly in the early years of a child's education. On the ABCM website, the full immersion method is described as being ideal for the effective learning of the RL. This leads to the question why, if it is overtly recognised as being a more advantageous learning method, this policy is not adopted by the ABCM schools. As the schools were founded and are maintained as a result of parent demand, it can be assumed that there have not been enough requests from parents for this type of education. A further examination of the reasons for this language-in-education policy will follow in the case study below (cf. section 5.5.2).

⁷³ 'L'association se donne pour but d'offrir à tous les parents qui en expriment la volonté, la possibilité de faire bénéficier leurs enfants d'une éducation bilingue régionale dès leur plus jeune âge : Français [*sic*] – langue régionale d'Alsace et Moselle [...] Par langue régionale d'Alsace et de Moselle, il faut entendre l'Allemand [*sic*] à la fois sous sa forme standard et sous ses formes dialectales (dialectes franciques et alémaniques de la région)' (ABCM Zweisprachigkeit statutes, Article 2, from ABCM Zweisprachigkeit 2005).

The teachers employed in these schools are native speakers or individuals with mother tongue linguistic competency (Rudio 2007, 65); this means that the German teachers originate mainly from German-speaking countries. As a consequence, although the RL is recognised as comprising standard German and Alsatian, the teachers of German in the ABCM schools are not in a position to teach the traditionally spoken regional language variety. The French teachers in these schools are employed on the grounds that they are Alsatian speakers, and therefore they originate mainly from the region of Alsace or the neighbouring *département* of Moselle. This illustrates further the complicated nature of teaching the RL in its two recognised forms in Alsace; although standard German is promoted as a component of the RL, it is also a neighbour language and a foreign language.

Although the ABCM schools are private, they should not be deemed as an elite form of education which excludes a significant proportion of the population. Parents pay fees to enrol their children in an ABCM school and further annual fees which are used to fund the running costs of the school. However, the fees are relatively modest in comparison with other private schools.⁷⁴ Furthermore, there are no entry requirements regarding the children's existing linguistic capabilities. Therefore, the ABCM schools are an option for a number of parents if they live within a suitable distance to one of the ten sites.

⁷⁴ As an example, for the 2012–13 school year, to enrol a child in the ABCM *école maternelle* 'Les Mickele' in Strasbourg, parents were required to pay a €160 registration fee for their first child in the school (€100 for any additional children), €86 to join the parent association (€20 for any additional children) and a payment of between €100 and €250 (dependent on household income) to cover the running costs of the school, which includes the wages of non-teaching personnel. Furthermore, parents are invited to make a voluntary financial contribution which would be used to make improvements to the conditions of the school. Available at: <<http://www.lesmickele.abcmzwei.eu/fr/dossier/192-completmickeleinscription20122013.html>> (Accessed 25 July 2012)

With reference to the bilingual education models examined earlier in this chapter, the model followed in the ABCM schools can be described as being additive or as constituting a strong form of bilingual education.⁷⁵ The aim of the education programme is the valorisation of the languages involved and proficiency in both French and the RL by the end of the schooling (which mainly pertains to standard German but also includes the traditionally spoken regional language variety).

4.8.2 Bilingual Education in the Public School System

Following a number of trials to teach German extensively, in the 1992–93 school year 38 equal immersion bilingual primary school classes were opened in the public system (Bister-Broosen and Willemyns 1998, 8). The public school bilingual sections correspond to stage 4a of Fishman’s GIDS, as they are fully supported in the same way as any other state-run school. Geiger-Jaillet (2005, 161–66) highlights the six main principles of public bilingual education programmes in Alsace, which largely correlate with the policy of the ABCM schools, namely: commencing bilingual education at an early age; the continued participation in a bilingual programme throughout compulsory education; the equal use of the languages; the voluntary participation of pupils and teachers; a model of one teacher–one language; and the use of the languages involved as media of instruction.

Similar to the original language policy of the ABCM schools, the public schools set out to provide bilingual education mainly in French and standard German only. However, in the early years, efforts were made in the public system to

⁷⁵ This observation is made on the assumption that the majority of children enter the bilingual education programme either with French, German or Alsatian as their L1. If their L1 is another language that is not supported in the schools, the aim of the programme could be described as subtractive.

recognise school sites where Alsatian may continue to be spoken by local children. An education bill from 20 October 1993 signed by Chief Education Officer Jean-Paul de Gaudemar set out an educational framework for bilingual sites and made reference to locations where Alsatian was known to be spoken: ‘In schools where the majority of children speak the dialect, it is preferable to use the dialect as a basis for a more natural and progressive passage towards German.’⁷⁶ This statement suggests that the inclusion of Alsatian in the classroom is encouraged not for its own development, but to utilise previous competence in Alsatian to aid the learning of the standard language. In an education bill from 20 December 1994, De Gaudemar reinforced the instruction that the language policy for the RL half of the teaching should be based mainly on German, as first had been set out by Deyon in 1985 (cf. section 3.8.1).⁷⁷ In this document, De Gaudemar states that a survey undertaken by the Académie de Strasbourg in the 1993–94 school year had revealed the clear decline in speaker numbers which had been observed in other studies. As a result of this, he suggests that in *écoles maternelles*, priority should be given to bilingualism in French and Alsatian where it was still being spoken; he notes that the success of such plans would depend fully on the actions of teachers who could speak Alsatian.⁷⁸ This reveals an apparent wish to try to help to maintain Alsatian, but at the same time

⁷⁶ ‘Dans une école où la majorité des enfants parle le dialecte, il est préférable de prendre appui sur le dialecte pour un passage plus naturel et progressif à l’allemand’ (Education bill, Académie de Strasbourg, 20 October 1993).

⁷⁷ ‘Dans l’Académie de Strasbourg, la bilinguisme visée est une bilinguisme français-allemand selon une acception de la langue régionale faisant l’objet d’un large consensus, formulée pour la première fois en juin 1985 et précisée à plusieurs reprises, notamment dans la circulaire du 20 septembre 1991’ (Education bill, Académie de Strasbourg, 20 December 1994).

⁷⁸ ‘L’enquête académique menée au cours de l’année scolaire 1993/94 a permis de dessiner, dans ses grandes lignes, un tableau de répartition géographique de la dialectophonie chez les enfants de 3 à 12 ans. Recoupées avec des enquêtes scientifiques réalisées au cours des quinze dernières années, ces indications font apparaître un net recul de la dialectophonie chez le public des classes maternelles et élémentaires. [...] Il convient de tirer de ces constats des conclusions claires : la priorité sera donnée, dès l’admission des enfants à l’école maternelle, et dans un souci d’efficacité, au bilinguisme dialecte-français, partout où la dialectophonie est suffisamment présente dans le milieu social et scolaire. [...] L’action des maîtres dialectophones qui seuls peuvent conduire cette action est donc décisive et conditionne la réussite d’un tel projet’ (Education bill, Académie de Strasbourg, 20 December 1994).

it is clear that there is no claim made that the schools will initiate its practice; if the teacher is not an Alsatian speaker and/or there are no Alsatian-speaking pupils in the class, bilingual education will be carried out in French and standard German. The significance of German being promoted in such an extensive manner in the public school system should not be underestimated. As the language of France's former enemy, which had been banned in Alsatian classrooms following the end of the Second World War, the decision to allow pupils to learn through German on an equal basis with French was momentous, and served to raise its status in the region.

Huck (2006, 130) notes that the references to Alsatian and Alsatian speakers that were present in official texts published from 1982 tended not to appear from the mid-1990s onwards. As intergenerational transmission continued to decline, it may be perceived that such specifications were deemed no longer relevant. Furthermore, there has been no strong demand from parents for the employment of Alsatian in public schools. The wishes of parents are crucial in the development of optional bilingual education programmes; if the chosen language policy is not deemed attractive, parents will not opt for this kind of schooling. The question of parents' wishes in education will be examined in the case study that follows.

Ideologies behind current language-in-education policy in public schools are revealed in the bilingual education programme descriptor on the website of the Académie de Strasbourg. It states clearly that the aim of the programme is the: 'Acquisition of a good mastery of the German language, oral and written, through the teaching of German and in German' (Académie de Strasbourg 2012a).⁷⁹ Alsatian is referred to only twice on the webpage, including one entry in the list 'Ten reasons to

⁷⁹ '(Objectif de l'enseignement bilingue) Acquisition d'une bonne maîtrise de la langue allemande orale et écrite, grâce à un enseignement de l'allemand et en allemand' (Académie de Strasbourg 2012a).

learn German’ which states: ‘The Alsatian dialects, like their language of reference, German, are a part of the linguistic heritage of our region, which should be saved.’⁸⁰ In another section of the webpage, Alsatian-speaking parents are advised to resume or increase their practice of the language variety at home in order to support the bilingual education programme.⁸¹ There remains the overt wish to encourage the maintenance of Alsatian, but still the public education system reveals no ambition to take on an active role to aid this, for example by including it in the school curriculum. In an agreement on regional education policy for the 2007–13 period, it is stated that at primary level:

Bilingual education will be provided equally between the two languages [French and German] and will rely on knowledge of the dialect, where appropriate. The teaching of and in German will allow all children to unlock and develop their practice of the dialect throughout their schooling. (Académie de Strasbourg 2007, 4)⁸²

Again this policy statement reveals that, although there is no specific role for Alsatian, where it is present it should be viewed positively. However, the acquisition and mastery of French and German clearly remain the key objectives of the school programme, and Alsatian is treated on an ad hoc basis. Linking to Bourdieu’s concept of the linguistic market (Bourdieu 1991; cf. section 4.2.1), competence in standard French and German, viewed in society as ‘legitimate’ languages, offers speakers valuable linguistic capital. The move to promote standard German in both the public and private sectors is congruous with the standard language culture that exists in France (Milroy 2001).

⁸⁰ ‘Les dialectes alsaciens, comme leur langue de référence, l’allemand, font partie du patrimoine linguistique de notre région, qu’il convient de sauvegarder’ (Académie de Strasbourg 2012a).

⁸¹ ‘Il est également conseillé aux parents dialectophones de reprendre ou de consolider l’emploi du dialecte avec leurs enfants en vue de soutenir le projet bilingue par cette pratique linguistique’ (Académie de Strasbourg 2012a).

⁸² ‘L’enseignement bilingue sera assuré à parité entre les deux langues et s’appuiera sur la connaissance dialectale, s’il y a lieu. L’enseignement de et en allemande permettra à tous les élèves de s’ouvrir et d’enrichir leur pratique dialectale tout au long de la scolarité’ (Académie de Strasbourg 2007, 4).

It is noteworthy that in the case of the ABCM schools the language policy originally was founded on French and German only, and the role of Alsatian has been developed in subsequent years, whilst in the public schools, in spite of original efforts to recognise and support Alsatian where it was deemed possible, the focus predominantly is now only on French and German. These developments illustrate that language-in-education policy, like any form of language policy, is not static, and it remains subject to change.

Geiger-Jaillet (2005, 167) argues that teachers who can speak Alsatian often do not use it effectively in class, which can be traced to their own negative language beliefs towards the language variety, and the fact that they do not associate its practice with the school setting. If teachers do hold positive language beliefs towards Alsatian, and they would be willing to use it in the classroom, they would need to initiate this themselves. Geiger-Jaillet (2005, 167–68) suggests that Alsatian-speaking teachers find it challenging to use Alsatian with pupils who may be able to understand it, but who do not speak it. As Alsatian remains to be spoken by a relatively high percentage of older speakers (cf. section 3.8.7) many children may have some passive knowledge of the language variety from contact with their grandparents; teachers would need to have a certain level of personal determination to find out what level of knowledge pupils may have of Alsatian and to find a way to work with this in the classroom.

As it was noted in the previous section, the number of bilingual education sections in the public school system is far greater than that which is offered by the ABCM schools, and they are available in locations throughout the region (as noted above [cf. section 4.7.2.2] in the public system there are no bilingual schools, but

rather bilingual sections in regular schools). In the 2011–12 school year bilingual education was followed by 10.5% of primary school pupils, 4% of pupils in *collèges* and 2.7% in *lycées* (Clerc 2012). These figures reveal that, in spite of the principle of pupils continuing in a bilingual programme throughout their school career, a significant number choose not to continue with this type of schooling when they enter secondary education. Geiger-Jaillet (2005, 172) suggests that this is a result of a feeling of ‘weariness’ of the bilingual system amongst pupils and parents.⁸³ Furthermore, she notes that the increase in the range of programmes available in secondary education has an impact; in particular many parents are attracted to the option to learn English as a first foreign language (2005, 173).

Unlike the ABCM schools, the principle of employing native speakers is not followed and there is no stipulation that teachers in public school bilingual sections must have any knowledge of Alsatian. As German is studied widely across France, the teachers of the RL half of the teaching in bilingual sections do not necessarily have any previous link with Alsace. Again this highlights the unique situation of RL teaching in the region; although Basque and Catalan are also spoken by a considerable number of people beyond France’s borders, the speakers are concentrated mainly in specific geographic areas that straddle the Franco-Spanish border. As a general rule, a principle of one teacher–one language is employed (Bister-Broosen and Willemyns 1998, 8). Initially the teachers who were employed were existing teachers who had a level of German that was adequate to teach in the language, on a voluntary basis. Since 2002, a specific teaching qualification for bilingual education teachers has been offered by the regional teacher training centre (Geiger-Jaillet 2005, 152). Although there is the option for Alsatian-speaking trainee

⁸³ ‘Au bout de quelques années d’apprentissage précoce, on constate un effet de lassitude chez les enfants et leurs parents’ (Geiger-Jaillet 2005, 172).

teachers to take some assessments in Alsatian, the training focuses on preparing teachers to teach in French and German.

At primary level, when pupils receive an equal amount of instruction in French and German, the subjects in the curriculum are divided evenly between the two languages. History, the French language (including French literature), civic training and ethical training (whereby students may be taught about religion depending on the wishes of their parents) are delivered in French, whilst mathematics, geography, science and technology and the German language are learnt through German; art and physical education are taught in both languages (Académie de Strasbourg, 2012a). With both languages being used as media of instruction, as Baker (2011, 228) has highlighted, the division of subjects and languages is not neutral (cf. section 4.3.2). As German is a prestigious language, employed to as a language of instruction internationally, there is more confidence that key subjects can be taught through this language, as well as a range of teaching materials that is readily available.

Upon their entry to a *collège* at the age of eleven, the number of hours of instruction in German received by pupils who continue to follow a bilingual education programme is reduced and includes four hours of German language, one hour of regional culture and language, and a varying number of hours in which a number of subjects are taught through German (Académie de Strasbourg 2012a). A more popular option, chosen by more than 50% of pupils, is a programme named *enseignement bilangue* in which they learn two languages as subjects, namely German and English (Académie de Strasbourg 2012b). Although at *lycée* level the term ‘bilingual education’ is no longer employed, pupils can continue to study

through the German language in CLIL-type European sections (cf. section 4.7.2.3) or in a programme that prepares for the Abibac (Académie de Strasbourg 2012a). Pupils who follow the bilingual education to the end of their secondary schooling can choose to sit the Abibac examination in place of the Baccalauréat (cf. section 4.7.2.3). The Abibac is an option for students of German in France as well as students of French in Germany. Being offered on a wide scale, the question of the bilingual education system in Alsace promoting the RL is again ambiguous. As language tests are a language policy mechanism to turn ideology into *de facto* language policy (cf. section 2.1.1), the language of tests is important in the formulation of language beliefs, and thus the fact that the Abibac is based on standard German boosts the prestige of this language variety.

Currently, the Académie de Strasbourg promotes a campaign that is supported by a number of French and German agencies entitled: ‘German, passport to the future’. In a brochure aimed at parents, knowledge of the German language is presented as being accessible, a tool to discover German culture and an asset in the pursuit of employment (Ministère de l’Éducation nationale 2012d). Positive language beliefs are displayed towards standard German which represents the potential for social and economic advancement. This contrasts with Alsatian which often is linked to tradition and, therefore, the past.

In 2011, the Chief Education Officer for the Alsace region, Armande Le Pellec Muller, proposed the introduction of primary bilingual school sections offering eight hours of instruction in German and sixteen hours in French (Hartmann 2011). Moving away from the principle of one teacher—one language, all of the teaching would be delivered by the same teacher, with two hours per school day dedicated to learning German and learning through German (Académie de

Strasbourg 2012d). As a trial, in September 2012 one *classe préparatoire* was opened in the Bas-Rhin and one in the Haut-Rhin following this model. Le Pellec Muller claims that the aim of this new bilingual education programme is not to replace the current programme, but rather eventually to encourage more parents to opt for the equal immersion bilingual education programme (Hartmann 2011). However, the proposal sparked vigorous protests amongst groups in favour of bilingualism in Alsace, leading to demonstrations in towns throughout the region (Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace 2011a) and the introduction of an online petition to request the plans to be withdrawn (Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace 2011b). By reducing the number of teaching hours in the RL by a third, this could impact not only on the teaching of German, but it would also threaten the presence of Alsatian in classrooms where it does play a small role.

As in the case of the ABCM schools, the public school sections can be described as providing a strong, additive form of bilingual education in which the aim is that pupils will leave the programmes proficient in French and German. Depending on the linguistic repertoire of the individual child, the programme can be described as an enrichment model or a maintenance model (cf. section 4.4.1); the applicability of the term 'heritage model' is contestable as, although standard German is recognised as belonging to the linguistic heritage of Alsace, it has not traditionally been spoken by Alsatians.

4.8.3 Bilingual Education Programmes in Alsace as a Means to Reverse the Language Shift?

In the last three decades regional cultures and languages have gained significant support in Europe (De Varennes 2009, 24), which has created space to support languages that have been forced into a minority position. The introduction of the

European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by the Council of Europe in the 1990s has been an important step in the recognition of linguistic human rights. De Varennes (2009, 24) contends that the recognition and respect for human rights, including respect for linguistic and cultural rights, is essential in modern democratic states. In France, this means that it is becoming more difficult to ignore and deny the rights of the country's RL speakers in the way that it has since the Revolution.

Returning to Fishman's GIDS, the effectiveness of the provision of Xish (here signifying Alsatian and standard German) at stages 4a and 4b is questioned with regard to reversing the language shift that has taken place in Alsace since the mid-twentieth century. Bister-Broosen (2002, 108) argues that a reversal in language practices is not to be expected in the region:

The loss of the Alsatian mother tongue is already so widely advanced and the possibilities of use for Alsatian or standard German in official domains so restricted, that even a generalisation of bilingual instruction is unlikely to bring about any consequential changes; the more so since a revival of the Alsatian dialects has never been the purpose of the policy makers who introduced the bilingual education system in the first place. The revival of High German in and through the educational system will certainly increase bilingual competence in general. It is not to be expected, though, that this will fundamentally change the linguistic habits of the Alsatians.

If it is unrealistic to claim that bilingual education in the RL will lead to a restoration of former language practices in Alsace, it is nonetheless a powerful language policy mechanism that influences language beliefs.

Throughout this thesis the importance of language beliefs has been highlighted in the discussion of language policy. Baker (1992, 97) argues that '[w]here a language is fighting for survival, encouraging positive attitudes becomes crucial'. He explains that language attitudes can be influenced 'through formal or

hidden curriculum and through extra curricula activities' (1992, 43). It is for this reason that it is not enough to study language-in-education policy documents alone; actual practice should also be observed. Baker (1992, 103) argues that teachers can act as 'human models' that pupils may imitate if they are respected and admired. If this is the case, the language attitudes displayed by the teacher will influence those of the pupils. This reinforces the notion explained above (cf. section 4.5) that teachers are important language policy agents; therefore, in any study of language-in-education policy, an examination of policy documents does not give a complete overview of the situation.

It has been stated above that equal bilingual education in public schools in France is only available in the RLs, and the introduction of these programmes marks a significant shift in national language management that has traditionally favoured the dominance of French. At a time when the RLs are enjoying more space than they ever have officially in the school domain, the bilingual associative schools and public school sections offer a means to decelerate, halt or reverse the language shift that has occurred across France. As standard German traditionally has been a language of writing and reference, but not used in everyday speech in Alsace, the role of the bilingual education programmes that are in place is limited. Although both the ABCM and public school systems espouse positive language beliefs towards Alsatian, in a hierarchy of the languages present, the standard languages, French and German, remain in a more privileged position.

Hélot (2008) contends that there is a priority of school bilingualism over home bilingualism in some public bilingual education programmes in France, citing the teaching of standard German and classical Arabic as examples. In both cases,

these languages traditionally have not been spoken in the home domain by the groups at whom the education policies are aimed. Hélot (2008, 223) argues:

In other words, despite what might look like advances at the level of policies towards regional languages or immigration languages, the way their provision is implemented shows that any prior knowledge of these languages is not envisaged as a potential social resource or as valuable linguistic capital.

This demonstrates that in spite of the recognition of minority languages, some language varieties, such as Alsatian and the various forms of Arabic, are being further minorised whilst the standard forms, which are deemed more prestigious and useful, are being promoted. However, in the case of Alsatian, its low intergenerational transmission in recent years means that many children in bilingual education have no previous knowledge of this language variety. In a case where a RL is recognised as being composed of more than one variety, decisions about language-in-education policy are linked to language ideologies, and, as discussed above, standard varieties are often favoured in any educational setting. As Alsatian has not undergone a process of standardisation, its prestige and the possibilities for its employment at school are limited. Therefore, designing a balanced language-in-education policy for RL teaching in Alsace presents many challenges; Sorg (1999, 172) highlights that a number of corpus planning measures would be necessary in order to implement a wide-reaching programme to teach Alsatian. Huck *et al* (2007, 77) suggest the following approach to RL teaching in Alsace: ‘For bilingual education, the lesson should be this: the Alsatian dialect for speaking or for some speaking, standard German for speaking and writing.’⁸⁴ Current official language-in-education policy would allow for this approach; Alsatian is no longer forbidden from

⁸⁴ ‘Pour l’enseignement bilingue, la leçon doit être celle-ci: le dialecte alsacien pour l’oral ou pour une partie de l’oral, l’allemand standard pour l’oral et pour l’écrit’ (Huck *et al* 2007, 77).

the school domain as it has been in the past. However, the decline in the number of speakers of Alsatian and negative language attitudes towards Alsatian in comparison with positive attitudes towards standard German, whose acquisition is seen as offering a number of advantages, remain obstacles to the development of its presence in education today.

4.9 Conclusion

In the last four decades, reflecting the global trend, bilingual education programmes have grown in popularity in France and today they are an option for many parents in both the public and private school sectors. There are a number of models in place, including full immersion, partial immersion and CLIL. However, the languages involved in each model are restricted, and hence there has evolved a hierarchy of languages used in bilingual education programmes in France. Currently the RLs are permitted the most possible space in the curriculum alongside French. Although they still do not have any official status, the RLs of France are in a stronger position than ever before in the public education system. However, Blackwood (2008, 89) highlights that although bilingual education programmes can alter children's school language practices, it does not mean that they will practise the RL in other domains. The refusal to include the associative schools in the public school system reveals that full immersion in the RLs remains a step too far for national language-in-education policy-makers. It remains to be seen in the coming decades if the implementation of any form of RL bilingual education programmes in France will lead to a reverse in the general language shift towards French monolingualism.

The space given to foreign and migrant languages in bilingual schools in France is more limited, and in the case of the latter it is often non-existent. In the

public school system the French language remains in the most privileged position, its acquisition a fundamental requirement to function in the Republic. In spite of the presence of so many languages other than French, which was recognised in the debates in France over the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the State's current language policy remains congruous with that promoted in the sixteenth century following the signing of the Edict of Villers-Cotterêts (1539), which was consolidated during the 1789 Revolution. Duverger (2005, 121) concludes on the situation of bilingualism and bilingual education in France:

The political issues are quite clear and hardly new: monolingualism and monolingual education have effectively always been used as—and continue to be used as—the building tools of States and nations and, in contrast, bilingualism and bilingual education are suspected of encouraging secessions, in any case divisions.⁸⁵

In the case of the RLs and other minority languages in particular, if these languages are to be revitalised and/or maintained, they need to be regarded as an asset, and not as a disruptive force, as Duverger suggests is the case.

Now in their third decade of operation, RL bilingual primary education programmes in Alsace are well established and, in particular at primary level, they are followed by a significant proportion of Alsatian children (involving 10.5% of public system pupils and over one thousand ABCM pupils in Alsace and Lorraine). In the early years of their existence, the ABCM schools followed a French and standard German only policy, but during the last decade a widespread change in language management had meant that the RL has also been introduced in its dialectal form, whose role has gradually increased in both the *écoles maternelles* and *élémentaires*. However, French and standard German continue to dominate in the

⁸⁵ 'Les enjeux politiques sont assez évidents et guère nouveaux : le monolinguisme et l'enseignement monolingue ont en effet toujours servi – et serve encore – d'instruments de construction des États et des nations et, *a contrario*, le bilinguisme et l'enseignement bilingue sont toujours suspectés de favoriser les sécessions, en tout cas les divisions' (Duverger 2005, 121).

classroom. Conversely, in the public school bilingual sections efforts were originally made to include Alsatian, yet French and standard German were soon prioritised to the extent that the inclusion of Alsatian is very limited or in some cases non-existent. In both the private and public school systems, the home domain is perceived as the place in which Alsatian must be learnt to guarantee its maintenance.

As standard German has not traditionally been spoken in Alsatian homes, where Alsatian is not present in the school programme it is questionable whether this can be labelled as constituting a heritage model of bilingual education. Rather the programmes currently in place seem to fit more the enrichment model, wherein most pupils enter the programmes with French as their L1 and the L2 (standard German or standard German with Alsatian) is acquired whilst continuing to develop the L1.

García (2009, 82) argues that '[b]ilingual education has an important role to play not only in language acquisition, but also in language shift, language maintenance, and language revitalization'. However, its success depends on the way that it is implemented. At the macro level and micro level, the decisions made by the actors involved, from ministries of education to individual classrooms, influence the outcome of bilingual education programmes. It is essential to remember that the policies set out by language-in-education policy-makers may not be congruous with actual classroom practice. García and Menken (2010, 257) note that 'despite the existence of official documents, language education policies are socially constructed and dynamically negotiated on a moment-by-moment basis'. However, Hélot and Young (2006, 72) describe the French education system as 'very centralised and hierarchical' and they argue that '[w]hile teachers do have pedagogical freedom in their classrooms, the very ambitious curriculum leaves little room for innovation'. This will be an important consideration in the Alsace case study, when looking at

language policy documents destined for a large number of schools, and when examining the actions of individual teachers through classroom observations.

It is impossible to cover all, or even the majority, of the aspects and nuances of bilingual education within one chapter of a thesis. However, the principal concepts and key terms have been explained here. It has been illustrated that, as stated by Baker (2011, 207), bilingual education is a very complex area of study and there are many factors to consider when examining any such education programme. Furthermore, the development of bilingual education programmes in France and Alsace has not been straightforward. It is with this in mind that the case study on current bilingual education programmes in Alsace is now approached.

Chapter 5: Case Study: Current Language Policy in Bilingual Primary Schools in Alsace

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters of this thesis, there has been an examination of language policy, language-in-education policy and bilingual education, both as general fields of study and also their development in the specific contexts of France and of Alsace. This analysis frames the fieldwork that was carried out for this research project in the 2009–10 school year in the Alsace region. The aim of the fieldwork is to examine further the current language policy in bilingual primary classes in Alsace, making use of the components of Spolsky's tripartite model which have been employed throughout this thesis, namely language management, language practices and language beliefs.

There has been a clear move towards considering language rights as human rights since 1990, which has been supported by supranational organisations and institutions (Pupavac 2012, 24). This presents minority language groups with the opportunity to exert their linguistic human rights in a way that previously has been impossible. Since the late eighteenth century, Alsatian speakers have been encouraged to dismiss their mother tongue in favour of French or standard German depending on the political rulers at a given time. As France and Germany sought to consolidate themselves as nation-states, the language rights of their citizens were deemed to be unimportant. However, in the twenty-first century these rights can no longer be denied without question.

In the previous chapter it has been stated that the bilingual education systems in place currently in Alsace do not primarily aim to reverse the language shift from Alsatian to French that has taken place in the region in recent decades (cf. section 4.8.3). The language policy of bilingual classes is nonetheless important to consider

with regard to the survival of this language variety, as actions in and around the classroom influence language behaviour beyond the school domain. In his case study on Gallo, Nolan (2010, 249–251) observes that language beliefs towards the RL are more positive amongst pupils who are currently studying it at school than those held by their parents, for whom Gallo was not taught when they were pupils. In this case study, although it is fully expected that French and standard German will play the most dominant roles in the bilingual classrooms, one of the main objectives of the fieldwork is to investigate if, how, and when Alsatian is introduced, and to assess current language beliefs towards the use of Alsatian, which has traditionally been linked to the home domain, in an educational setting.

5.2 Methodology

To gain a comprehensive overview of current language-in-education policy in Alsace, it has been necessary to adopt a multi-strand approach to the research. Language beliefs, practices and management will be presented in separate sections here, but the three continue to be viewed as intertwined components of language policy. To assess language beliefs, each parent of a child who attends the bilingual school sites visited was invited to complete a questionnaire. Owing to the time and financial limitations and to the nature of the project, the participants of the questionnaires were not chosen according to statistical rules, which would have represented a more balanced cross-section of the population. Teachers from the bilingual school sites visited were interviewed, and teachers and trainee teachers completed questionnaires. Furthermore, interviews were carried out with representatives from the ABCM school network and the Académie de Strasbourg, who influence language-in-education policy-making at regional level. The analysis

of language beliefs will be mainly qualitative, but there will also be some quantitative analysis of the parent and the trainee teacher questionnaires and, to a lesser extent, the teacher questionnaires.

To examine current language practices, in addition to looking at policy statements, classroom observations were carried out in bilingual primary school sites. In the early stages of the project, the decision was taken to focus the research on primary schools; as it has been highlighted above (cf. section 4.8.2), the percentage of pupils following a bilingual programme in Alsace is significantly higher at primary level than at secondary level. Moreover, there is more space for the RL component in the curriculum at primary level; when pupils enter secondary education they learn additional languages and can choose a number of different learning pathways. Furthermore, one of the aims of secondary education is to prepare students to sit exams, which will be carried out in the standard languages. This means that there is a greater probability that Alsatian may play a role alongside standard German at primary level. The focus on primary education also allows the inclusion of ABCM schools in the study, which do not operate at secondary level.

Current language management in bilingual primary schools will be assessed through the classroom observations and interviews and questionnaires completed by teachers and trainee teachers, the aim of which is to investigate how teachers actually manage language use in the classroom today. As it has been explained above (cf. section 4.5), teachers as individuals have a certain level of agency in putting language policies into practice; they are the language managers in their own classrooms. Language management will also be examined in the interviews that were completed by the representatives from the ABCM school network and the Académie

de Strasbourg who influence the development of official language-in-education policy in the private and public school systems.

This case study builds on the previous work on bilingual education in Alsace that has been carried out mainly by researchers connected to the University of Strasbourg; the multi-faceted approach to the research, applying Spolsky's language policy model, and examining the language policies of a range of the key actors involved in the bilingual education programmes, sets this project apart from the existing work. Furthermore, it comes at a crucial time in the history of the Alsatian RL; although intergenerational transmission of Alsatian has already been disrupted in many cases, Alsatian is still sufficiently present in the region to slow down the language shift, even if a complete reversal is unlikely.

Full approval for the fieldwork involved as part of the project was granted by the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Liverpool, the Académie de Strasbourg and the ABCM school network.

5.2.1 Research Sites

In order to try to gain a more comprehensive overview of current language policy in primary bilingual education programmes in Alsace, it was deemed necessary to carry out the research both in a city and in a small town/large village setting. As the use of Alsatian is noted as having diminished more significantly in the most urban areas, it was expected that there would be more support for the language variety in the latter setting. Strasbourg was chosen as a starting point for the research as the regional capital and the largest city in Alsace, with a population of 271,708 inhabitants within the city proper (INSEE 2009b). The coordinator of modern language teaching for the

Bas-Rhin *département* in the Académie de Strasbourg then selected the public primary school bilingual sections to be observed for the study. A school site in the centre of the city of Strasbourg comprising an *école maternelle* and an *école élémentaire* was chosen, as well as an *école élémentaire* in the town of Saverne. Situated to the north west of Strasbourg, Saverne is a small town which has a population of 12,046 (INSEE 2009c). The public school bilingual sections proposed by the Académie de Strasbourg were deemed to be suitable for the purposes of the proposed research project; permission was then sought to carry out fieldwork in the ABCM schools in each of the locations. As it was discovered that in Strasbourg and Saverne the ABCM network currently operates only *écoles maternelles*, another location with an ABCM *école élémentaire* was added to the study: Haguenau. Haguenau is a town of 34,648 inhabitants (INSEE 2009d) which is situated to the north of Strasbourg. Although it is a considerably larger town than Saverne, Haguenau can still be classed as relatively small town in comparison to Strasbourg. All of the research sites chosen are located in the Bas-Rhin *département* in the north of the Alsace region (Figure 15); it was decided that this area may be most of interest as although Strasbourg, alongside Colmar and Mulhouse, has been identified as a location where the language shift away from Alsatian has been most significant, the north of the Bas-Rhin *département* in which Saverne and Haguenau are situated is recognised as retaining the highest number of Alsatian speakers (INSEE 2002, 4). Ideally, the research sites involved would have covered the entire Alsace region, including sites in the Haut-Rhin *département*; however, due to the time and financial restraints of the project, it was necessary to limit the research to the Bas-Rhin area only (Figure 16).



Figure 15: Map of Alsace administrative départements

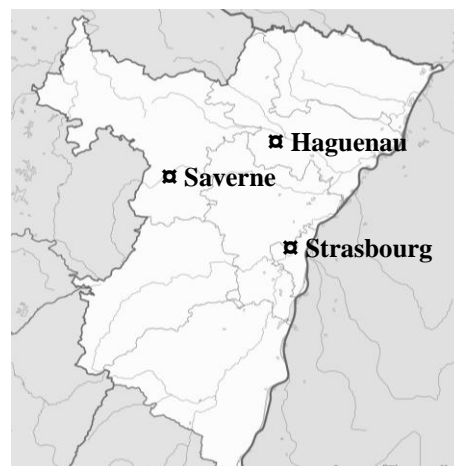


Figure 16: Map of the project's research sites

5.3 Language Beliefs

It has been proposed throughout this thesis that language beliefs play a crucial role in the formulation of language policy. Therefore, one of the key aims of the fieldwork was to study the language beliefs of the key actors involved in shaping bilingual education programmes in Alsace, namely the language-in-education policy-makers who organise the programmes at a regional level, teachers and trainee teachers and parents. Of course, the language beliefs of the actors at the centre of the education programmes, i.e. the pupils, are equally important to consider. Cohen *et al* (2007, 374–6) identify the numerous challenges that are involved in interviewing children, which would require a very carefully-planned and rigorous approach. As the pupils involved in this project are very young, ranging in age from three to eleven years old, and as only a short period of time would be spent in each school site, it was decided that the questioning of pupils would not be pursued as a part of this project. The groups of respondents will be presented here in the order of the number of responses received, starting with the largest group, the parents, and then looking at the language beliefs of trainee teachers and lastly teachers. The language beliefs

displayed by the representatives of the ABCM school network and the Académie de Strasbourg will be examined in the section on language management below (cf. section 5.5.2).

5.3.1 Language Beliefs of Parents

The parent questionnaire comprised twelve questions and was designed to be no longer than two sides of A4 paper for two principal reasons: first, so that it would be easy for young children to pass on to their parents in its complete form, and second, so that it would be relatively quick to complete and return in order to maximise the total number of responses. Below each question a small space was included so that respondents could include additional comments if they so wished. The questions included were aimed primarily at gaining information on the parents' language practices and language beliefs. A total of 266 questionnaires were completed by parents across the six schools visited; 102 questionnaires were completed by parents of children in ABCM schools and 164 questionnaires by parents of children in the public school bilingual sections visited (see appendix 1 for the parent questionnaire and full results).

One of the key aims of the parent questionnaires is to examine their general language beliefs towards Alsatian, standard German and French; the reasons for their choice of a bilingual education programme for their child; and if they are (in the case of the ABCM schools), or they would be (in the public school sections), favourable towards the inclusion of Alsatian in the school domain. When parents were asked if they believe that Alsatian remains important for the regional culture of Alsace today, almost 90% of the total respondents replied that they believe that this is the case, whilst only 4.1% of all parents questioned disagreed (Table 1).

	Yes	No	Depends	Don't know	No answer
Stras ABCM (<i>m</i>)	21 (100%)	0	0	0	0
Sav ABCM (<i>m</i>)	15 (93.75%)	0	0	1 (6.25%)	0
Hag ABCM (<i>é</i>)	60 (92.3%)	0	1 (1.5%)	0	4 (6.2%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	11 (84.6%)	1 (7.7%)	0	1 (7.7%)	0
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	51 (79.7%)	8 (12.5%)	0	2 (3.1%)	3 (4.7%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	81 (93.1%)	2 (2.3%)	0	2 (2.3%)	2 (2.3%)
Total	239 (89.8%)	11 (4.1%)	1 (0.4%)	6 (2.3%)	9 (3.4%)

Table 1: Results of parent questionnaire question: In your opinion, is Alsatian still important for the regional culture?

This indicates widespread positive language beliefs towards Alsatian at the present time, which improves the language variety's chances of survival. It is important to note that the number of parents who responded positively to this question is higher in the ABCM schools in all locations and in the public school section in Saverne in comparison with the responses from the parents in the Strasbourg public *écoles maternelle* and *élémentaire*. This suggests that, based on the parents who completed a questionnaire, the ABCM and non-Strasbourg parents are more likely to hold positive language beliefs towards Alsatian, although the figure for respondents from the public school sections in Strasbourg is also high and it represents a clear majority. Asked if one can feel Alsatian without speaking Alsatian, over two thirds of all respondents stated that it is not necessary to speak the traditional language variety to feel Alsatian (Table 2).

	Yes	No	Yes & no	Don't know	No answer
Stras ABCM (<i>m</i>)	16 (76.2%)	3 (14.3%)	1 (4.75%)	1 (4.75%)	0
Sav ABCM (<i>m</i>)	12 (75%)	2 (12.5%)	0	2 (12.5%)	0
Hag ABCM (<i>é</i>)	37 (56.9%)	22 (33.9%)	1 (1.5%)	1 (1.5%)	4 (6.2%)
Stras (<i>m</i>)	9 (69.2%)	3 (23.1%)	0	1 (7.7%)	0
Stras (<i>é</i>)	46 (71.9%)	10 (15.6%)	0	5 (7.8%)	3 (4.7%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	60 (69%)	19 (21.8%)	3 (3.5%)	1 (1.1%)	4 (4.6%)
Total	180 (67.7%)	59 (22.2%)	5 (1.9%)	11 (4.1%)	11 (4.1%)

Table 2: Results of parent questionnaire question: In your opinion, can one feel Alsatian without speaking Alsatian?

The responses to these two questions suggest that, although Alsatian is popularly valued as a part of the culture of the region, in twenty-first century Alsace it is not widely considered to be essential for one's regional identity. This underlines the shift in *de facto* language policy in the region since the beginning of the twentieth century, when Alsatian was spoken by 95% of the population (cf. section 3.8.7, Figure 9) and the language variety was closely linked to the identity of Alsatians. A similar trend in language attitudes has been witnessed on Corsica (Jaffe 1999; Blackwood 2008). Jaffe (1999, 176) suggests that for a section of the population the link between language and culture on Corsica can be described as 'romantic' rather than 'essentialist': although the RL is valued as a part of the regional culture, it is not considered to be a vital element of regional identity. The disassociation of the practice of the RL and one's regional identity will be detrimental to the ultimate survival of the RL, as it is not deemed necessary to speak Xish to feel like an integrated member of the Xish community. However, Oakes (2011a, 53) suggests that a reversal of this type of situation is possible if a group wishes to re-establish its specific culture and other boundary markers do not achieve this.

To assess why parents have chosen a bilingual education programme for their child, in one question the respondents were given three options from which to choose to describe their decision, namely: to learn standard German, an important foreign language; to learn standard German, the neighbour language; to learn standard and dialectal German, the RL. 41% of the total respondents stated that it was to learn standard German, which they view as an important foreign language, 26.3% to learn the neighbour language and only 16.2% to learn what they consider to be the RL (Table 3).

	Foreign language	Neighbour language	Regional language	More than one reason	German parent L1	Other reason
Stras ABCM (<i>m</i>)	5 (23.8%)	5 (23.8%)	3 (14.3%)	7 (33.3%)	0	1 (4.8%)
Sav ABCM (<i>m</i>)	5 (31.25%)	0	7 (43.75%)	3 (18.75%)	1 (6.25%)	0
Hag ABCM (<i>é</i>)	25 (38.5%)	6 (9.2%)	25 (38.5%)	9 (13.8%)	0	0
Stras (<i>m</i>)	9 (69.2%)	3 (23.1%)	1 (7.7%)	0	0	0
Stras (<i>é</i>)	31 (48.4%)	23 (36%)	0	10 (18.6%)	0	0
Sav (<i>é</i>)	34 (39.1%)	33 (38%)	7 (8%)	13 (14.9%)	0	0
Total	109 (41%)	70 (26.3%)	43 (16.2%)	42(15.8%)	1 (0.35%)	1(0.35%)

Table 3: Results of parent questionnaire question: Why have you chosen a bilingual education programme for your child?

It is important to highlight that a significantly higher proportion of parents in the ABCM schools chose the RL option than parents in the public school sections, who more often stated that it was to learn what they consider to be a foreign language, in particular the Strasbourg public school sections. Although in the public school system the bilingual education programmes in place have been developed only because of the status of standard German as an RL, this data suggests that many parents do not necessarily consider the language in this way. The fact that more than two thirds of parents overall choose a bilingual education programme for their child so that they can learn what they view to be a foreign or a neighbour language indicates that their principal interest lies in the learning of standard German. This underlines again the unique position of the RL in Alsace in the context of France. Owing to its dual nature, it is possible for a prestigious international language to be employed in RL bilingual education programmes, which is an attractive prospect for parents. However, this relegates the traditionally-spoken language variety, Alsatian, to a minor or non-existent position in the school domain.

Asked if they believe that Alsatian should play a role at school, over a half of all respondents indicated that in their opinion the language variety should have a role (Table 4).

	Yes	No	Don't know	Conditional	No answer
Stras ABCM (<i>m</i>)	15 (71.4%)	3 (14.3%)	0	2 (9.5%)	1 (4.8%)
Sav ABCM (<i>m</i>)	12 (75%)	3 (18.75%)	1 (6.25%)	0	0
Hag ABCM (<i>é</i>)	51 (78.5%)	5 (7.7%)	3 (4.6%)	0	6 (9.2%)
Stras (<i>m</i>)	7 (53.8%)	5 (38.5%)	1 (7.7%)	0	0
Stras (<i>é</i>)	13 (20.3%)	40 (62.5%)	4 (6.2%)	6 (9.4%)	1 (1.6%)
Sav (<i>é</i>)	46 (52.9%)	27 (31%)	2 (2.3%)	12 (13.8%)	0
Total	144 (54.2%)	83 (31.2%)	11 (4.1%)	20 (7.5%)	8 (3%)

Table 4: Results of parent questionnaire question: In your opinion, should the Alsatian dialect have a role at school?

The term ‘role’ was employed in this question to encompass a range of possibilities for the employment of the language variety within the school domain. The number of parent respondents who believe that Alsatian should have a role is significantly higher in ABCM schools (on average 76.5%), where Alsatian is already included to varying extents. However, in the public school sections the average is only 40.2% of respondents, and the figure drops to just 20.3% in one of the sections, which illustrates a clear divide in the language beliefs of parents in the private and public school systems towards Alsatian. The parents in the ABCM schools present themselves as being more committed to the cause of regional bilingualism; they have to pay for their child to attend this type of school and thus they have made an explicit choice not to enrol them in a more widely available, and free of charge, public school bilingual section. However, in private conversation with two teachers from the ABCM schools, they suggested that the motivations of parents are not always strictly linguistic; rather, parents also base their decision on the reputation of the individual school, or they are attracted by the perceived higher status of sending their child to a private school. Therefore, care must be taken when making assumptions about the choices made by individuals. Nevertheless, it is presumed that most parents will have more than a passive interest in the language policy of the school, as it forms the basis of the existence of the ABCM schools, which is set out to parents when they enrol

their child in one of the schools in meetings, in open days and in statements on enrolment forms.

As it has been stated above, space was left between questions on the questionnaire for respondents to add further comments to explain their answers if they so wished. The additional comments that explain or justify an answer will be analysed here to look for patterns in parent language attitudes that may be representative of wider trends. However, it is kept firmly in mind that any form of categorisation of language beliefs must be approached cautiously; there is no claim made that the comments from parents in six school sites can represent comprehensively the attitudes of all parents in Alsace, nor even all of the parents in the school sites that form a part of this study, as not all parents returned the questionnaires and not all respondents provided this extra information. Furthermore, as in any sociolinguistic research of this type, the accuracy of self-reporting must be questioned, as what respondents openly claim about their language practices and language beliefs may be incongruous with their actual practices and beliefs (Milroy and Milroy 1999, 15).

The largest number of parents (28.6%; twelve out of a total forty-two respondents) in favour of Alsatian having a role at school who provided additional comments on the questionnaire indicated that they believe that the role of the language variety should be limited. The parent respondents (PRs) who displayed this opinion provided comments such as:

- ‘Yes, for secondary subjects (music, sports, art)’ (PR58);
- ‘Yes, it could be used upon arrival, between classes, upon departure’ (PR26);
- ‘Yes. Speaking the Alsatian dialect during breaks, playtime is a good initiative’ (PR83);
- ‘Yes, in the form of songs and rhymes’ (PR87);
- ‘Only in the *école maternelle*’ (PR98);
- ‘Yes, one hour for the regional language’ (PR196);
- ‘Yes, but minor’ (PR247).

This suggests that, although these parents are favourable to the inclusion of Alsatian at school, they would prefer it to be employed in specific, mainly non-academic activities, and for only a short amount of time in the school week. It is noteworthy to add that equal numbers of parents from the ABCM and public schools provided this kind of further comment, which suggests that although more parents of children in ABCM schools overtly support the presence of Alsatian, both sets of parents share similar language beliefs. The next largest group of respondents (19%) suggested that Alsatian should have a role at school, but ultimately they believe that French and standard German must be prioritised:

- ‘An initiation is important, but the correct learning of French and German has priority’ (PR1);
- ‘Yes, but not as a priority’ (PR31);
- ‘Yes, but a secondary role’ (PR202);
- ‘Yes, but not in place of what is currently carried out in German’ (PR240).

These statements suggest that there is a hierarchy of language beliefs amongst this section of parents, in which French and standard German are the most highly valued languages. Again, roughly equal numbers from the ABCM schools and public school sections expressed this viewpoint in the additional comments, which demonstrates that there is no divide in this kind of rationale towards Alsatian between the two systems. 14.3% of respondents (four parents from the public school bilingual sections and two from the ABCM schools) stated that they would be in favour of Alsatian because it could aid the learning of standard German:

- ‘Alsatian is a way to tackle standard German’ (PR68);
- ‘Yes, it’s an aid for better pronunciation and comprehension of German’ (PR194);
- ‘Yes, to aid the understanding of the German spoken in the different *Länder* [regional states of Germany]’ (PR221).
- ‘Yes absolutely, it would make the learning of German easier’ (PR226);

This implies that some parents support the employment of the language variety from a mainly utilitarian viewpoint; although on the surface it appears that they have positive language beliefs towards Alsatian, they value it mainly as a tool to assist in the mastery of standard German and the understanding of other varieties of the language. As stated above, the Académie de Strasbourg has also envisaged the inclusion of Alsatian in bilingual classes for this purpose (cf. section 4.8.2). 11.9% of respondents stated that they believe that Alsatian should have a role at school to reflect the traditional culture of the region:

‘Yes, because it’s a part of our regional heritage’ (PR76);
‘Yes, as a vector of intergenerational communication’ (PR 49);
‘It would be worth introducing it in class because it is a part of our culture’ (PR159).

It is interesting to highlight that whilst four respondents from the ABCM schools made this kind of comment, only one respondent from the public school sections did the same, which links to the observation made earlier that ABCM parents are more likely than parents in the public school system to choose a bilingual education programme so that their child can learn what they see as a RL. 11.9% (respondents all from the public school bilingual sections) expressed that they feel that they would like Alsatian to have a role, but that it should be optional to parents:

‘[It] should be a choice’ (PR127);
‘[It should be] optional, for families who want it (PR128);
‘Only on a voluntary basis’ (PR251).

4.8% of respondents (one parent from an ABCM school, one from a public school bilingual section) stated that they would be in favour of a role for Alsatian, but essentially they believe that it should be transmitted in the home, which corresponds with the traditionally held view that it is a language of the home domain. This

viewpoint is not uncommon in RL-speaking areas of France, where the school and other essential public domains have been associated with the employment of standard languages. Blackwood (2008, 117) highlights a local rejection to the school being relied upon as the principal domain to transmit the RL on Corsica through compulsory language classes, in part because Corsicans feel that RL activists should not employ the same methods that the State used to impose the French language. Furthermore, Jaffe (2001, 286) observes that learning Corsican at school is deemed ‘by some people as a contaminating, deauthenticating act’. This highlights the challenges faced by language-in-education policy-makers to introduce into classrooms language varieties that have been traditionally associated with the home domain. 4.8% of respondents (one from an ABCM school, one from a public school bilingual section) stated that Alsatian should be reserved for Alsatian-speaking children only, which ties in with the idea of maintaining heritage and tradition. Finally, 4.8% (two respondents from public school sections) stated that they would be in favour of Alsatian playing a role because they value bilingualism and language-learning in general.

Almost one third of respondents explicitly expressed that they would not be in favour of Alsatian having a role at school. Respondents of this viewpoint are mainly parents from the public school bilingual sections, and in one of the Strasbourg public sections the figure reaches 62.5%. Fourteen respondents provided further comments to explain their answers. 28.6% (two respondents from the ABCM schools and two from the public school bilingual sections) stated that they are interested only in the learning of French and standard German:

‘We chose this school for the teaching of German’ (PR103);
‘We are in France after all, and French must remain dominant’ (PR177).

This again illustrates clearly positive attitudes towards the prestigious standard languages. 21.4% (one respondent from an ABCM school, two from a public school bilingual section) explained that they believed that Alsatian should primarily be learnt in the home/family domain:

‘No, it is transmitted by parents and/or grandparents’ (PR24);
‘For me, bilingual education is French and German. Alsatian is spoken at home’ (PR180).

This again exemplifies the widely reported belief that Alsatian is a language of the home, although today this is often not the case. 21.4% (all respondents from public school bilingual sections) stated that they would be against Alsatian having a role at school as it could hinder the learning of standard German, offering comments such as: ‘No, the dialect and German are not identical, it would create errors’ (PR145).

This contrasts with the rationale presented above, which is supported by the school systems, that Alsatian can aid the mastery of German. 14.3% (respondents from the Strasbourg public *école élémentaire*) stated that they would be against a role for Alsatian as they feel that it is no longer relevant in daily life:

‘In Strasbourg, too many children do not speak the dialect; it no longer has a real-life meaning in town’ (PR165);
‘No, in as far as it doesn’t have any meaning for my daughter’ (PR179).

This kind of response would be expected more in Strasbourg than in the other locations where Alsatian is known to be more frequently employed (INSEE 2002, 4). The contemporary belief that the employment of Alsatian is irrelevant or unsuitable in urban centres such as Strasbourg limits the efforts to reverse the language shift in these areas where large sections of the population live. Furthermore, it reinforces the notion that Alsatian is less suitable for modern life than the standard languages

available. 7.1% (one respondent from an ABCM school) commented that they would prefer Alsatian not to have a role because of the level of variation between dialects. The issue of internal variation is also prominent in the discussion of the teaching of the other RLs. In the south of France, where Occitan traditionally has been spoken across several administrative *départements*, the challenge presented by internal variation has led to the development of teaching materials that include all of the main varieties of the RL (Verny 2009). On Corsica, Corsicans have expressed the belief that the transmission of the RL at school will act to diminish its local character (Blackwood 2008, 122 and 127). However, the RLs are being taught successfully in spite of the concerns over variation; in the ABCM schools each teacher or classroom assistant employs their own variety of Alsatian. Lastly, 7.1% (one parent from a public school section) said that they would be against the employment of Alsatian because of its strongly regional character, which could signify that they feel that it is less useful to learn in comparison to the more widely-spoken standard German, or it could reflect a personal belief that a strong sense of regionalism is undesirable.

The analysis of these comments reveals that care must be taken not to make any strong statements about language beliefs. Although over a half of all of the parent respondents indicated that they would be in favour of Alsatian having a role at school, a closer examination of the rationales expressed demonstrates that the language beliefs of parents are diverse. While the parents in the ABCM schools appear to be significantly more favourable to Alsatian playing a role at school from the questionnaire data, it has been shown here that sections of parents from both systems hold similar views. Furthermore, there are links between the language beliefs of the parents who stated that Alsatian should have a role and those who stated that it should not; for example, both sets of respondents expressed the view

that Alsatian should be transmitted in the family, and that French and standard German should be prioritised. This illustrates that, although the responses ‘yes’ and ‘no’ appear to be completely opposed on a questionnaire, in a real life situation the rationales are strikingly close. As a result of this, the act of designing and maintaining a language-in-education policy that suits a range of parents is a complex process, and extra care must be taken when assessing such education programmes.

Following the question on whether or not Alsatian should have a role at school, parents were asked if they would be happy if their children had the opportunity to hear or speak Alsatian in class. The aim of this question was to assess if parents would be more favourable to the language variety being employed on more of an ad hoc basis, rather than having a defined role. On the whole, the figures of those in favour were higher than in the previous question, accounting for 82.4% on average in the ABCM schools (where Alsatian is already employed) and 53% on average in the public school sections (Table 5).

	Yes	No	Not important	Conditional	Don't know	No answer
Stras ABCM (<i>m</i>)	18 (85.7%)	1 (4.8%)	0	1 (4.8%)	0	1 (4.7%)
Sav ABCM (<i>m</i>)	12(75%)	2 (12.5%)	1 (6.25%)	1 (6.25%)	0	0
Hag ABCM (<i>é</i>)	54 (83.1%)	6 (9.2%)	2 (3.1%)	0	0	3 (4.6%)
Stras (<i>m</i>)	6 (46.1%)	3 (23.1%)	0	2 (15.4%)	1 (7.7%)	1 (7.7%)
Stras (<i>é</i>)	28 (43.75%)	28 (43.75%)	0	1 (1.6%)	5 (7.8%)	2 (3.1%)
Sav (<i>é</i>)	53 (60.9%)	20 (23%)	4 (4.6%)	9 (10.3%)	0	1 (1.2%)
Total	171 (64.3%)	60 (22.6%)	7 (2.6%)	14 (5.2%)	6 (2.3%)	8 (3%)

Table 5: Results of parent questionnaire question: Would you be happy if your child had the opportunity to hear/speak Alsatian in class?

This was anticipated when the questionnaire was designed, and it indicates that for some parents a less-defined place for Alsatian is preferable. Again, the figures suggest that there is a division in language beliefs towards Alsatian between the two systems, whereby parents from the ABCM schools hold, or at least appear to hold,

more positive language beliefs towards Alsatian and are more favourable to the RL being employed in both of its recognised forms at school.

Thirty respondents who stated that they would be favourable to their child having the opportunity to hear or speak Alsatian at school provided additional comments that suggested their rationale for answering in this way. It is noteworthy that 60% of the parents who provided additional comments here did not provide a comment for the previous question, so it is not the case that the comments of a similar nature in both questions are being made by the same individuals. The rationales displayed in response to this question correspond largely to those highlighted in response to the previous question. 30% of respondents (mainly from the public school sections) stated that they would be happy for their child to have the opportunity to hear or speak Alsatian, but they stated specific conditions or contexts in which they believe that the language variety should be employed:

- ‘Only occasionally, but not regularly’ (PR7);
- ‘Yes, to illustrate what a dialect is, and selectively’ (PR179);
- ‘Yes, but without getting into an evaluated learning’ (PR204);
- ‘Yes, in a playful way, without obligation’ (PR209);
- ‘Why not... (e.g. in theatre workshops, songs, stories)’ (PR240);
- ‘Yes, but there must be enough time for the curriculum’ (PR261).

As it has been seen in the responses to the previous question, this section of parents does not regard Alsatian as appropriate for academic-related activities, which they believe should be carried out in French and standard German. This exemplifies the observation that the use of standard languages is generally preferred in formal education settings (cf. section 4.2.1). Showing similar language attitudes to this section of parents, 26.7% of respondents (equally from ABCM schools and public

school sections) stated explicitly that, although they would be happy for their child to hear/speak Alsatian, French and German ultimately remain their priority:

‘Yes, if the Alsatian dialect does not penalise the learning of French and German’ (PR93);

‘Yes, but my priority is the teaching of German’ (PR87);

‘Yes, I believe so, as long as it does not create confusion with German’ (PR174);

‘Yes but not for more than an hour per week, French (spelling and grammar) must not suffer!!!’ (PR196).

Again, the languages in question seem to be viewed in a clearly hierarchical manner by this section of parents, who place French and standard German on an equal footing as the most important languages for their children to learn, whilst Alsatian, although valued to a certain extent (suggested by the respondents answering ‘yes’ to the question), finds itself in a position of lower esteem.

20% of respondents stated that they would be favourable to the employment of Alsatian to reflect the region’s history or traditional culture. Interestingly, whereas the parents who made this kind of observation in response to the previous question were mainly from the ABCM schools, here more parents from the public school bilingual sections demonstrated this kind of rationale, which illustrates that both sets of parents value Alsatian in this way:

‘Yes, I think that it’s good to maintain the local culture’ (PR21);

‘It’s a part of our culture– of course’ (PR38);

‘Yes, but not to learn it, but so that he knows that here in Alsace another language is spoken, the dialect, to know the history of Alsace’ (PR177);

‘In a historical context, where the appearance of the Alsatian dialect would be explained to the children’ (PR138).

The fact that more parents from the public school system answered in this way here than in the previous question suggests that parents in both systems share similar

beliefs, but that in the public system there is a tendency to prefer a less-structured use of Alsatian at school. As Alsatian has a more defined role in the ABCM schools, the ABCM parents have already accepted this policy in enrolling their children, whilst in the public system the parents have committed to a programme in which the main focus is on the promotion of French and standard German only. 6.7% of respondents (from public school bilingual sections) stated that they would be favourable to Alsatian as it could help the learning of German:

‘Yes, if only to have an ear for the dialect to prepare for German’ (PR212);
‘It can be an advantage because the language is very close [to German]’
(PR258).

This kind of standpoint sees Alsatian in effect as a stepping stone to help the learning of standard German; there is no sense that it would be advantageous for their children to learn Alsatian in its own right. This undermines the efforts made by RL activists since the 1951 Deixonne law, which excluded the teaching of Alsatian, Corsican and Flemish on the basis that they were variants of foreign languages rather than RLs (cf. section 2.3.7). 6.7% of respondents (from the ABCM and public school systems) stated that they would be happy for their children to hear/speak Alsatian because they believe that it is beneficial for them to be exposed to a dialect: ‘The knowledge of a dialect in addition to the standard language is always enriching’ (PR11). The term ‘enriching’ reveals a positive language attitude towards Alsatian; it suggests that, instead of being viewed as a language variety whose employment can be exploited as a tool to aid the ultimate learning of a more attractive variety (i.e. standard German), which echoes the goals of subtractive bilingual education models (cf. section 4.4.2), here Alsatian is considered to provide extra benefits which will be maintained. One parent, representing 3.3% of respondents (from a public school

bilingual section) stated that they would be favourable to Alsatian being used at school, but only on an optional basis, suggesting: ‘An extra hour for interested children’ (PR214). This type of rationale was also displayed by public school parents in the question about Alsatian having a role at school, which suggests that there would be opposition to the compulsory introduction of the language variety in the public bilingual education programme. One respondent (from a public school bilingual section) stated that, although they would be favourable to their child hearing of speaking Alsatian at school, they believed that it should be learnt in another domain: ‘Yes, but in my opinion it is not the place to learn Alsatian’ (PR180). Finally, in contrast with the largest group, who stated that they would agree only if Alsatian were used in a limited way, one parent (from a public school bilingual section) said that they would be favourable only if it was employed on a regular basis, which suggests that they would prefer a more involved learning of the language variety. Again this highlights the challenges involved in creating language-in-education policies that fit the demands of all parents.

Additional comments were provided by fourteen respondents who stated that they would not be favourable to their child having the opportunity to hear or to speak Alsatian at school. Again, it is worth pointing out that the comments were not made by the same individuals for each of the questions, in fact only two people gave explanations for why they said ‘no’ to both of the questions. The majority of the respondents (42.9%; four ABCM parents and one public school respondent) stated that they would not be in favour of Alsatian use because they do not see it as a priority in comparison with learning the standard languages:

‘For us, it’s more important that the children learn German’ (PR57);
‘It’s not the priority’ (PR96);

‘I wouldn’t be happy if my children had the opportunity to hear/speak the Alsatian dialect in class because it’s neither international nor national’ (PR133).

This again suggests that there exists a hierarchy of languages in which French and standard German are considered to be more attractive owing to their wider use. The fact that parents who fundamentally answer the question in an opposing way, but who provide strikingly similar rationales, suggests that one group have a greater tolerance of Alsatian. Their tolerance, or intolerance, depends on their personal experience of the language variety; if they view it as a valuable asset for their children, parents will be more favourable to it being introduced in the classroom.

21.4% of respondents (all from the public school sections) stated that they would be against Alsatian being employed because the language variety should be transmitted elsewhere:

‘No, it should remain in the family setting’ (PR199);
‘School is not the place to really “learn” Alsatian— which should be transmitted in an environment where it would be spoken widely’ (PR161).

This corresponds with the responses examined in the previous question. The belief that the transmission and the use of the RL should be limited to the home domain, although there is evidence that this practice is in decline, creates an obstacle to RLS efforts in the domain of formal education. 21.4% (from the public school sections) stated that they felt that the curriculum followed is already too heavy, implying that there would be no time or space to add Alsatian:

‘No— the curriculum is too heavy’ (PR184);
‘For children who are not “Alsatian” learning bilingually is an investment of time for them and the parents. Adding Alsatian on top seems too much to me’ (PR251).

This is linked to the rationale that Alsatian is not seen as a priority in bilingual education, but rather as an ‘extra’ which should be employed only if the learning of the standard languages is not compromised. Lastly, 14.3% (from ABCM schools and public school sections equally) stated that they felt that the use of Alsatian would hinder the children’s learning in the other languages:

‘Not speaking the dialect at home, I find that it would be an additional complication for my child’ (PR30);
‘No, in order to avoid too much confusion’ (PR228).

The question of whether knowledge of Alsatian helps or hinders the acquisition of standard German has divided certain sections of parents in both of the questions analysed here. Although since the 1990s the Académie de Strasbourg has encouraged parents to maintain Alsatian to help the development of standard German (cf. section 4.8.2), this link is not widely accepted by all parents.

It is interesting to note that in response to this question three parents (all from public school sections) made a distinction between being favourable to their children having the opportunity to hear Alsatian, but not wanting them to speak it. Only one respondent gave an explanation as to why they would not want their child to produce Alsatian in the classroom: ‘School is not the place to really “learn” Alsatian’ (PR161). A positive attitude towards a passive learning of Alsatian, in distinction to a negative towards an active learning, demonstrates once more the complicated nature of language beliefs and the difficulty in attempting to identify trends in these beliefs.

5.3.2 Trainee Teacher Language Beliefs

The language beliefs of trainee teachers are important to consider in an examination of language-in-education policy, as are the beliefs of current teachers, which will be

examined in the next section. As a part of this project, a ten-question survey was undertaken with trainee teachers who were training at the Alsace IUFM (Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres) to become teachers in the public bilingual education system (see appendix 2 for the trainee teacher questionnaire and results). The questionnaires were completed on site by two sets of trainee teachers on two separate occasions; in total, fifty-two questionnaires were completed. The anonymous nature of the questionnaire was emphasised to the respondents; they were asked to answer as truthfully as they could, and it was explained to them that there were no 'right' or 'wrong' answers.

Fifteen of the trainee teachers questioned (28.8%) named Alsatian, or the closely related language variety spoken in the neighbouring region of Lorraine, as one of their mother tongues. This suggests that over a quarter of the respondents potentially would be able to employ it in the classroom. Nevertheless, the number of respondents who have Alsatian as a first language constitutes a minority overall (the majority of respondents [57.7%] named French as their only mother tongue). Furthermore, 78.8% of the trainee teachers claimed that they had some knowledge of Alsatian orally and 48.1% of written Alsatian. The nature of this question is vague as it does not reveal the extent of any knowledge and, as it has been stated above, there is always a question over accuracy in self-reports of language usage and beliefs. Nevertheless, the data produced from the questionnaire suggests that a significant proportion of trainee teachers would be in a position to employ Alsatian in some way with pupils. 53.8% of respondents stated that they had already met Alsatian-speaking children during school work placements or expected to do so in future placements. Again, it is not possible to make any substantial assumptions about the vitality of Alsatian amongst children on the basis of this information, but it does suggest that

the language variety remains a relevant factor in the consideration of the development of a language policy for the modern classroom in Alsace.

It is interesting to observe that whilst most of the questionnaire was answered virtually in silence, in both groups an animated discussion broke out when respondents reached the question: ‘Is a dialect-speaking pupil allowed to speak Alsatian in class?’ The trainee teachers appeared perplexed by the question, asking each other’s opinions and then turning to myself and their teacher for advice, at which point they were reminded that there was no correct or incorrect response to any of the questions. The aim of this question was twofold: first, to examine whether the language-in-education policy of the Académie de Strasbourg, which overtly claims to encourage the use of the language variety (cf. section 4.8.2), is communicated clearly to its teachers, and second, to examine the language attitudes of the trainee teachers towards the use of Alsatian in their classrooms. Almost two thirds (65.4%) of respondents replied that they believed that it is allowed, whilst 15.4% said that they did not know, and 9.6% replied they believed that it is not. Of those who replied that they believed that it is allowed, twenty-two provided further comments to explain their viewpoint. Over one third (40.9%) of those who commented noted that Alsatian is allowed, but that French and German must remain the priority in the classroom:

‘In a bilingual class, they will be allowed, but they will be encouraged to speak standard German’ (TTR1);

‘I think so. Alsatian is the mother tongue of some children and as it is close to German I don’t see any disadvantages. But I would limit its use as the priority is German and French’ (TTR18);

‘I think that I would tolerate it, but in trying little by little to guide them towards the German language, or French depending on the class in which they found themselves. It’s important to conserve the culture of the region.’ (TTR23);

‘Yes they are allowed, but German must have a greater presence than Alsatian’ (TTR31).

This suggests a salient hierarchisation of language varieties wherein Alsatian is valued to some extent, but standard German and French are prioritised. This perceived hierarchy echoes the language beliefs displayed by the parent respondents, which suggests a wider trend in language beliefs in Alsace today. As it is exemplified by TTR23, these types of comments suggest a tolerance of Alsatian rather than an active promotion of the language variety, which will limit its employment in the classroom. Linking in with this rationale, 22.7% of respondents who added further comments stated that they would allow Alsatian since, to their mind, it would aid the learning of standard German:

‘For a dialect-speaking teacher, I don’t think that it poses a problem because they could make the link between Alsatian and German’ (TTR12);

‘I think that it is fundamental: a good teacher should compare the dialect and German to show the similarities between the two languages. The learning of German will be easier’ (TTR21);

‘In my opinion, a dialect-speaking pupil is allowed to speak Alsatian in class to facilitate their understanding of German. But they mustn’t speak Alsatian instead of French or German’ (TTR25).

Whilst this group of respondents can be said to hold positive language beliefs towards Alsatian, as they state definitely that its use would be permitted, primarily it is perceived as a tool to learn German. If Alsatian is viewed widely as having a utilitarian value, to aid the acquisition and mastery of German, it will encourage more teachers to make use of it in the classroom, but there is no ambition for the continued development of Alsatian. As a consequence, the school can act as a means to support Alsatian where it already exists, but it will do little to encourage new

learners. Lastly, 22.7% stated that Alsatian would be allowed, but only in certain circumstances. Comments from this section of respondents include:

‘Sometimes the work is on French or German so speaking Alsatian would not be advantageous. But between pupils or in particular situations it’s even recommended’ (TTR3);

‘So as not to disrupt the lesson, I think that it would be good to put into place a lesson in Alsatian at some point in the week for the pupils concerned’ (TTR5);

‘Alsatian could be used for a play, a theatre sketch, in the weekly culture hour’ (TTR51).

This kind of rationale suggests that, whilst Alsatian is valued and its use would be welcomed in certain contexts, French and German are considered to be the key languages of academic-related activity. Whilst any way in which Alsatian is introduced in public education fosters positive beliefs towards the language variety, as it is recognised in society as a key H language domain, the potential for its promotion is limited. At a time when the transmission of Alsatian in the home domain is in decline, presently the bilingual education programmes in place in Alsace do not offer a level of support that could reverse the language shift that has taken place.

The respondents who stated that they did not know whether Alsatian is allowed in the classroom did not provide any further comments. Of the five comments provided by the respondents who answered that they did not think that Alsatian is allowed, no clear trends emerged in the rationales displayed. The fact that a quarter of all respondents answered that they did not know if or they did not believe that Alsatian is allowed, and the general discussion provoked by this question, suggests that the language-in-education policy of the Académie de Strasbourg regarding Alsatian is not communicated explicitly to its future teachers. It is clear that the overarching aim of the education programme is bilingual competence

in French and standard German, whilst the possibility to employ Alsatian is implicit, leaving it to the teachers themselves to decide the role of the language variety.

Lastly, the respondents were asked if they believe that the teaching of German signifies a promotion of the RL. The largest group of respondents (44.2%) stated that they believed that this is the case. However, almost as many respondents (40.4%) disagreed with this viewpoint. Although official language-in-education policy states that German is taught in bilingual education programmes in Alsace owing to its position as the written form of the RL, this data suggests that in some cases there is a mismatch between official statements and the beliefs of a significant proportion of the key actors in the system.

5.3.3 Teacher Language Beliefs

As a part of the fieldwork, questionnaires were distributed to teachers in all of the research sites visited to assess their language practices and beliefs; in total twenty-one responses were received (from nine teachers in public school bilingual sections and twelve ABCM school teachers). This is insufficient for any significant quantitative analysis in the same way as the parent and trainee teacher questionnaires. However, with regard to language beliefs there will be some qualitative analysis of the comments provided by the respondents, as well as comments made in individual interviews and private conversation. In the teacher questionnaire, in response to the question ‘Are pupils allowed to speak Alsatian in class?’, the majority of teacher respondents (TRs) (80.9%) replied ‘yes’ in both the private and public systems (100% in all schools apart from the public *école élémentaire* in Strasbourg, where only one out of the five teachers questioned replied ‘yes’). This overall majority corresponds to the official policy statements of both

systems. However, one teacher respondent from the Strasbourg public *école élémentaire*, whose sole mother tongue is Alsatian, replied: ‘No, it is not in the national curriculum’ (TR1). In an interview, the same respondent stated that although the use of Alsatian is not forbidden, ‘it is not the aim to teach it to the children’. This suggests that, although the Académie de Strasbourg claims that it encourages the use of Alsatian, this language policy is not clearly communicated to all teachers. Furthermore, in private conversation with one Alsatian-speaking teacher from the public bilingual section in Saverne, he commented: ‘I teach German, but I would teach Alsatian tomorrow if [official language-in-education policy] changed, it’s our language, not German. But German’s the language that we have to teach.’ Clearer top-down language-in-education policy statements, instilling the language belief in such teachers that Alsatian can be used legitimately within the classroom, would lead to a change in classroom language practices.

In interviews, the Alsatian-speaking teachers stated that the use of Alsatian was forbidden at school when they were pupils; one teacher recalled that there were punishments for speaking Alsatian in the classroom. Although this is no longer the case, this experience may create barriers for these teachers to employ the language variety easily within their own classrooms. Therefore, more direct actions from the Académie de Strasbourg to encourage the use of Alsatian at school would be a positive move for the promotion of the language variety in the public bilingual education system, where the role of Alsatian is not defined as it is in the ABCM schools.

In the questionnaires teachers were asked how they view the teaching of German in bilingual programmes in Alsace, in particular if they see it as teaching a foreign language, neighbour language, or as the RL. Of the twenty-one teachers that

completed questionnaires, thirteen (61.9%) stated that they viewed it as the neighbour language, whilst five (23.8%) responded that they saw it as teaching the RL, two as (9.5%) a foreign language and one (4.8%) as both the regional and neighbour language. It is noteworthy that of the five respondents who stated that the teaching of German represented the teaching of the RL, four were teachers from the ABCM schools, where the Alsatian has a greater presence. This data again exemplifies the complex nature of the definition of the RL in Alsace, which different actors view in different ways. As a result, the approaches to teaching depends on the language beliefs of individual teachers: a teacher who views the language that they teach as a foreign or a neighbour language will more likely favour the employment of standard German only in their classroom, whilst teachers who view it as the RL may also introduce the local language variety, Alsatian. The absence of a clearly defined role for Alsatian in the public system signifies that teachers have an important role as language-in-education policy-makers; their personal language beliefs necessarily influence their actions.

5.4 Language Practices

It has been maintained in this thesis that language practices refer to the ways in which language is actually used in real-life situations. Returning to the data produced from the parent questionnaires, there will be an examination of the use of Alsatian in the home, with other family members and in other private domains. It has been stated earlier (cf. section 2.1.3) that in public domains language practices may not correspond exactly with language management that is set out from above. To examine actual language practices in bilingual schools, it was decided that classroom observations should form a key part of the fieldwork in Alsace. At least one full

week would be spent observing one or two classes in each school so as to gain a complete picture of the school week experienced by the pupils. The results from the ABCM schools are presented before the public school systems here, in line with the presentation in the first part of the chapter. It should be reiterated, however, that the majority of pupils following a bilingual education programme at primary level in Alsace attend a public school bilingual section.

5.4.1 Language Practices outside of School

Although the main focus of the research carried out as a part of this project is language policy within bilingual schools, it is also essential to consider language practices outside of the school domain, namely in the home-family-neighbourhood setting outlined by Fishman at stage 6 of the GIDS. To assess the language practices that the pupils were exposed to in the schools visited, questions on language use were included in a questionnaire to be completed by parents that was distributed to each child in all of the schools.

The data gathered from the parent questionnaires reveal that the linguistic repertoire of parents in the private and public school systems contains a number of mother tongues. 22.6% of parent respondents declared Alsatian as their only mother tongue, or as one of their mother tongues (Table 6).

	Parent mother tongue Alsatian	Parent mother tongue other
Stras ABCM (<i>m</i>)	4 (19%)	17 (81%)
Sav ABCM (<i>m</i>)	7 (44.75%)	9 (56.25%)
Hag ABCM (<i>é</i>)	24 (36.9%)	41 (63.1%)
Stras (<i>m</i>)	0	13 (100%)
Stras (<i>é</i>)	7 (10.9%)	57 (89.1%)
Sav (<i>é</i>)	18 (20.7%)	69 (79.3%)
Total	60 (22.6%)	206 (77.4%)

Table 6: Results of parent questionnaire question: What is (are) your mother tongue(s)?

As it has been underlined earlier in this thesis, the accuracy of self-reported skills with regard to language beliefs or practices must be taken into consideration (Milroy and Milroy 1999, 15). 22.6% represents a not insignificant proportion of parents, although it is markedly less than the overall estimates of numbers of speakers in the region (cf. section 3.8.7). In an interview with Anita Marchal from the Académie de Strasbourg, she stated that a significant number of Alsatian-speaking parents choose not to enrol their children in a bilingual education programme as they believe that the mastery of the French language should be prioritised at school as the RL is transmitted in the home. It is important to add that, of the 22.6% of respondents in the survey who declared to have Alsatian as a mother tongue, it cannot be assumed that the same amount of parents have transmitted the language variety intergenerationally to their children. The number of parents declaring Alsatian as a mother tongue was significantly higher in Saverne and Haguenau in comparison to Strasbourg. As stated above, this is to be expected as Alsatian use is more prevalent in these areas (INSEE 2002, 4). Furthermore, the number of parents with Alsatian as a mother tongue is higher in the ABCM schools than in the public school sections (34.3% in ABCM schools and 15.2% in public school sections). Therefore, according to these results, pupils in bilingual programmes are more likely to be exposed to Alsatian with their parents if they live away from the city and if they attend an ABCM school.

In addition to Alsatian and French, the mother tongues listed in the parent questionnaire responses include: German, Swiss German, English, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Flemish, Dutch, Luxembourgish, Corsican, Polish, Slovak, Turkish, Armenian, Moroccan, Bassa and Lingala. This demonstrates that modern-day Alsace is a multicultural and multilingual society; this is very important to consider in this

examination of language policy of bilingual education programmes. It is noteworthy that, although the highest number of parents of non-Alsatian origin was found in Strasbourg as a general rule, in all of the schools visited at least 30.8% of the parents who responded to the questionnaire were not from Alsace originally.

A second question on language practices asked the parent respondents to state if their children had the opportunity to hear or to speak Alsatian in the following settings: in the home, with grandparents, with other family members, with neighbours, and in town. A Likert-type scale was employed to measure the pupils' exposure to Alsatian outside of the school, using the following classifications: very often; often; sometimes; rarely; never. The results revealed that in both the ABCM schools and the public school systems the majority of children do not hear or speak Alsatian on a regular basis in any of the domains suggested; only 4.9% overall falling into the category of 'very often' across the five settings, 7.8% 'often', 16.2% 'sometimes', 20.9% 'rarely' and 41.8% 'never' (Table 7).

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No answer
Stras ABCM(<i>m</i>)	1 (0.9%)	7 (6.7%)	22 (20.9%)	24 (22.9%)	48 (45.7%)	3 (2.9%)
Sav ABCM (<i>m</i>)	1 (1.25%)	14(17.5%)	23 (28.75%)	18 (22.5%)	24 (30%)	0
Hag ABCM (<i>é</i>)	39 (12%)	37(11.4%)	66 (20.3%)	59 (18.2%)	93 (28.6%)	31 (9.5%)
Stras (<i>m</i>)	0	1 (1.5%)	5 (7.7%)	12 (18.5%)	46 (70.8%)	1 (1.5%)
Stras (<i>é</i>)	9 (2.8%)	13 (4.1%)	31 (9.7%)	63 (19.7%)	165 (51.5%)	39 (12.2%)
Sav (<i>é</i>)	15 (3.4%)	32 (7.4%)	69 (15.9%)	102 (23.4%)	180 (41.4%)	37 (8.5%)
Total	65 (4.9%)	104 (7.8%)	216 (16.2%)	278 (20.9%)	556 (41.8%)	111 (8.4%)

Table 7: Results of parent questionnaire question: Outside of school, does your child have the opportunity to hear/speak the Alsatian dialect (across all settings)?

As it was expected, children are more likely to have contact with Alsatian with their grandparents, and particularly those who are not from Strasbourg, as Alsatian is known to be spoken by older generations and outside of the main urban centres (cf. sections 3.8 and 3.8.7). Nevertheless, on average only just over a quarter of the

pupils hears or speaks Alsatian with their grandparents frequently or very frequently (Table 8).

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No answer
Stras ABCM (<i>m</i>)	1 (4.8%)	4 (19.05%)	4 (19.05%)	5 (23.8%)	7 (33.3%)	0
Sav ABCM (<i>m</i>)	1 (6.25%)	4 (25%)	5 (31.25%)	2 (12.5%)	4 (25%)	0
Hag ABCM (<i>é</i>)	15 (23.1%)	12 (18.4%)	13 (20%)	4 (6.2%)	14 (21.5%)	7 (10.8%)
Stras (<i>m</i>)	0	1 (7.7%)	2 (15.4%)	0	10 (76.9%)	0
Stras (<i>é</i>)	4 (6.2%)	6 (9.4%)	9 (14.1%)	7 (10.9%)	30 (46.9%)	8 (12.5%)
Sav (<i>é</i>)	9 (10.3%)	15 (17.2%)	14 (16.1%)	12 (13.8%)	30 (34.5%)	7 (8.1%)
Total	30 (11.3%)	42 (15.8%)	47 (17.6%)	30 (11.3%)	95 (35.7%)	22 (8.3%)

Table 8: Results of parent questionnaire question: Outside of school, does your child have the opportunity to hear/speak the Alsatian dialect with grandparents?

The largest group never has the opportunity to practise, or be in the presence of others practising, Alsatian in the non-school settings listed. In the absence of Alsatian being spoken in the home domain, it can be argued that its relevance amongst young people today is diminished. However, its inclusion at school acts as a means to inspire interest in the language variety and, if there are parents or other relatives who can speak Alsatian but who have chosen not to pass it on intergenerationally, it could act as a catalyst to encourage its use.

5.4.2 Language Practices in ABCM Bilingual Schools

The classroom observations carried out in the Strasbourg ABCM *école maternelle*, situated in the centre of the city, revealed that the language-in-education policy set out by the ABCM network is closely followed for the main part, with all classes receiving 50% (two full days) of education in standard German with a German-speaking teacher from a germanophone country, one and a half days in French and a half day in Alsatian led by a French/Alsatian-speaking teacher from the Alsace region. The teachers observed employed their target language throughout their teaching, apart from isolated incidences when the teacher required the immediate

attention of the pupils, when the language switched to the mother tongue of the majority of the children: French. It is important to remember that although the pupils are following an education programme whose aim is bilingualism, for most primary school pupils their dominant language is French. The employment of French as the default language of the classroom to convey important instructions, to gain their attention in a dangerous situation, or to scold children, elevates its status above the other languages present.

Each *école maternelle* class in France is attended by one classroom assistant who supports the teacher in the reception of pupils, the preparation and the overall running of the class (Académie de Strasbourg 2012c). The pupils are in contact with the assistant throughout the school day, and therefore the assistant should be recognised as a key actor at this level of education, and their language behaviours are very important to consider. As a general rule, in the ABCM *écoles maternelles* the classroom assistants are all Alsatian speakers and they are requested to speak it in class. However, in the Strasbourg school the Alsatian-speaking classroom assistants also employed French and sometimes German; in private conversation, they stated that they should employ only Alsatian, but that they struggle to not switch languages with children who have no prior knowledge of the RL. In contradiction to the general ABCM policy, one classroom assistant spoke French only as she does not speak Alsatian or German. The head teacher explained that this was because a suitable Alsatian-speaking candidate had not been found, and she added that in Strasbourg it is not easy to find young women who still speak Alsatian fluently. In this situation the individual's professional ability as a classroom assistant has been prioritised over her linguistic ability. If transmission of Alsatian continues to decline, this will hinder

the efforts of the ABCM school network to employ the language variety in its schools.

In all of the *écoles maternelles* visited the introduction of a different language was signalled with the use of a hand puppet at the beginning and close of a session. This is important as the children at this level are very young and the puppet becomes a tool to aid them to make the switch between languages. In a number of the classes the puppet to signal the introduction of Alsatian was a stork; a symbol which has become emblematic of the region of Alsace. The main activities undertaken in the Alsatian sessions in the Strasbourg ABCM school focussed on basic vocabulary building, story-telling and singing songs. During the observations, one French/Alsatian-speaking teacher relied repeatedly on written supports, such as story books and signs of days of the week and months, in French rather than the supports available in standard German during the Alsatian session. When questioned about this in an interview, the teacher explained: ‘Yes, because Alsatian should be linked to French, I don’t do German. German is [spoken by] [name of German-speaking teacher].’ Other teachers observed referred to both French and German written supports. This highlights the unusual status of the RL in the ABCM schools; although Alsatian and standard German are accepted as being two elements of the RL and are obviously closely related linguistically, their employment is clearly separated.

The predominant lingua franca employed by the children when communicating with each other in any of the classes in this school was French, apart from in isolated incidences when all of the discourse participants came from a German-speaking home, when the children sometimes communicated with each

other in German. However, the French language remained omnipresent as the language of pupils, a fact that was also observed in all of the other schools visited.

The observations carried out in the ABCM *école maternelle* in Saverne revealed that, as in the Strasbourg school, German was employed for exactly half of the teaching, and roughly one and a half days were carried out in French and a half day in Alsatian. The head teacher explained that in the previous year a full day was carried out in Alsatian. As most pupils would attend a public school bilingual section when they leave the *école maternelle*, where 50% of the teaching would be undertaken in French, she explained that the teachers felt that carrying out only one day in French did not prepare the children well enough for this. The French/Alsatian teachers switched between languages more often in the ABCM school in Saverne than in the Strasbourg school; one teacher stated that she employs the language that she feels most appropriate depending on the activity carried out. Another teacher stated that she preferred to use Alsatian in workshops that may include baking or doing certain craft activities, in which she can use a range of vocabulary. The type of activities named reflects a language belief that the use of Alsatian is best suited to certain situations. The association of the use of Alsatian in tasks that are linked to the home domain reinforces the language belief that the language variety is not suited to serious academic activity. As a consequence, this places Alsatian below French and standard German in a perceived hierarchy of the language varieties present in the school domain. On the whole, the children appeared to have a slightly better understanding of Alsatian than in the Strasbourg school, as they were able to follow instructions given in the language variety more readily, although very few of the children produced Alsatian independently. The most common language of communication between the children was French. The teachers of Alsatian adapted

both French and German written supports in the classes here. One teacher, who was also the head teacher of the school, wrote a small number of words in Alsatian in the board. This is nonetheless significant as Alsatian is primarily associated with oral practice; as it has been noted above (cf. section 4.2.1), the act of writing a minorised language can act to raise its status. The fact that the person writing it was also the teacher and the head teacher, roles which traditionally command respect, acts to improve further the status of Alsatian.

The classroom assistants in this school appeared to be more at ease employing Alsatian with the children than those in the Strasbourg school, mainly switching to French only after an instruction in Alsatian had not been understood. In private conversation, one assistant in her fifties stated: ‘My generation is the last to speak Alsatian. Moreover, we weren’t allowed to speak it at school’; when I added that this was no longer the case, she added: ‘But they [the pupils] don’t speak it anymore.’ This exemplifies the viewpoint supported by Schwengler (1989, 41; cf. section 3.8.1), that bilingual education has been introduced too late in Alsace for it to have a sufficiently positive effect on the maintenance of the RL. However, figures suggest that, in spite of the significant drop in the number of Alsatian speakers (cf. section 3.8.7), today Alsatian remains in a strong position in the context of the RLs of France. However, sustained action in favour of the promotion of Alsatian is required in order for language-in-education policy to have a positive influence of language beliefs and practices.

In the ABCM *école élémentaire* visited, located in the town of Haguenau, the language management set out by the school network again was closely followed, with standard German being employed as the language of instruction for half of the

teaching, and the other half in French. Pupils in this school also have regular workshops (*ateliers*) in which Alsatian is used; usually this involves singing songs or going through a story which the teacher adapts from a French book. During the classroom observations in this school the pupils spent some time preparing for a school production in which each class would present a separate short play. Two classes would present their play in Alsatian, whilst the other classes would use French or German, to reflect the linguistic repertoire of the school. In one of the classes preparing their play in Alsatian, the Alsatian-speaking French teacher had already distributed roles on the basis of their knowledge of Alsatian (the roles with more lines being given to those who had most knowledge of the language variety). Although approximately one third of the pupils claimed to speak Alsatian when asked in class, the language of communication between the children inside and outside of the classroom remained French. The teacher had adapted the play from a well-known fairy tale and had written the lines herself; she noted that writing Alsatian down is not straightforward. This was highlighted when a pupil came to the teacher to see how a word that the teacher had written down should be pronounced; the teacher wrote it in another way, which the child then appeared to understand. In this school there appeared to be a clear demarcation of the academic-related work that is carried out in French and standard German, and the cultural production which can be carried out in Alsatian. This approach elevates the status of Alsatian as it introduces the use of the language in a traditional H language domain until the end of the pupils' primary education, but it also fosters the language belief that the suitability of Alsatian is limited to certain contexts.

5.4.2.1 The Linguistic Landscape of ABCM Bilingual Schools

It has been explained above (cf. sections 2.1.1 and 3.6) that the linguistic landscape refers to language signs displayed in public spaces. Cenoz and Gorter (2006, 67–68) suggest that the linguistic landscape ‘reflects the relative power and status of the different languages in a specific sociolinguistic context’ and also influences language beliefs and practices. Therefore, it is important to consider the linguistic landscape of the bilingual classrooms here alongside language practices. As stated above, within the classroom, García (2009, 294) highlights decorations, signs and books as the main components of the linguistic landscape. The ‘Mir rede Elsassisch’ stickers produced by the E Friehjohr fer unsri Sproch association (cf. section 3.8.5) were displayed in several places in the Strasbourg school, including the classroom doors. In an interview, the head teacher stated that these signs had been put up by the teachers in the school to indicate to pupils and parents the acceptance of Alsatian use; another teacher suggested that they signal that the ABCM schools are different from other schools, where the employment of Alsatian is not as clearly supported. Apart from this, the linguistic landscape of the three ABCM schools visited was comprised only of French and standard German, largely in equal measure. As it has been traditionally a predominantly oral form of communication, it is perhaps unsurprising that it is not represented in the linguistic landscape in the same way as the standard languages, French and German, which are strongly linked to writing. The dominance of French and standard German in the linguistic landscape of the ABCM schools reflects their power and status in this space. As a consequence, the individuals who frequent this space on a regular basis identify these language varieties as important, which influences their language beliefs and practices.

As a part of the fieldwork carried out for this project in Alsace, a training day for ABCM primary school teachers was observed. During the training day the French/Alsatian teachers from all of the ABCM *écoles maternelles* were tasked with preparing materials to use in the Alsatian school sessions. Although the participants had no difficulty in expressing their ideas in Alsatian orally, when it was proposed that the ideas should be written down, most were reluctant to take control, and about half of the teachers stated that they did not know how to write Alsatian. This lack of ability, or the lack of confidence in the ability, to write Alsatian on the behalf of speakers limits its potential to have a significant impact on the linguistic landscape of the school domain.

5.4.3 Language Practices in Public School Bilingual Sections

Situated in the centre of the city of Strasbourg, only a few streets from the ABCM school, in the public bilingual *école maternelle* section observed as a part of this project none of the teachers, nor the classroom assistants, were Alsatian-speaking. Therefore, half of the classes took place in French and half in standard German, with no reference to Alsatian at any time.

Located within the same building, the classroom observations carried out in the Strasbourg public *école élémentaire* section were mainly undertaken in the classes of an Alsatian-speaking teacher of German from Alsace, who was the only Alsatian-speaking teacher in the bilingual section. All of the teaching was carried out in standard German only; at the beginning of the observations the teacher informed me that none of the children spoke Alsatian, and therefore he would not employ it. On the first day of the observations, the teacher explained to the pupils in German that I would be present in class throughout the week, and he added that my research

involved ‘Elsässisch; die elsässische Sprache’ (‘Alsatian, the Alsatian language’), which provoked no reaction from the class. When he added ‘der elsässische dialekt’ (‘the Alsatian dialect’), one pupil questioned ‘l’alsacien?’, but there were no additional comments from the class to suggest any level of interest amongst the pupils on the subject. This behaviour links to the observation made by a section of parents (cf. section 5.3.1) that Alsatian is no longer relevant to young people in the city of Strasbourg.

The classroom observations in the Saverne *école élémentaire* were primarily undertaken in the classes of two Alsatian-speaking teachers in the RL half of the teaching. Standard German was employed for all curriculum-related activities, yet both teachers employed Alsatian in a small way with their pupils. One Alsatian-speaking teacher stated that he employs Alsatian ‘nine times out of ten’ with his pupils outside of the classroom, providing as examples the corridor and the playground. This illustrates that, although the Académie de Strasbourg states that it encourages use of Alsatian, teachers remain reluctant to practise it in class.

Traditionally, as Alsatian has not been recognised as a language of the school, many Alsatian-speaking teachers who attended school before the 1990s will have been educated in an environment where its use was discouraged and even punished. In the absence of transparent top-down language management with regard to the possible implementation of Alsatian at school, it depends on the teacher to develop their own classroom language policies. The other Alsatian-speaking teacher in this school employed Alsatian for one half-hour activity in the week, teaching the children a song from a CD containing Alsatian songs. He stated that he did this on an irregular basis due to the demands of the curriculum, and mainly in preparation for some kind of festival or school production.

During the observations in the Saverne public school bilingual section, an Alsatian singer had been invited in for half of a day to teach each class in the school a song that they would later perform in a school concert. During the session the singer explained the meaning of the Alsatian words in the song and their pronunciation to the children in German. The pupils, particularly in the older classes (*cours moyen 1* and *cours moyen 2*), appeared to grasp the Alsatian words quickly after being repeated two or three times; this could be explained by the fact that the older pupils are more at ease with standard German as they have been taught through the language for a longer period. Importantly, the pupils appeared enthusiastic throughout the session, which could be a sign of positive language beliefs towards the RL. In private conversation, one teacher explained that the teachers had decided to invite this singer because: ‘we all have to teach German and in German in bilingual classes, but we are, above all, Alsations too and that means that, if we can, we like to do something for the regional culture and therefore the regional language.’ This reveals that the teachers here do not see the teaching of German as being linked to the regional culture and the RL, which contradicts the official viewpoint of the education system. In an interview undertaken with Anita Marchal, the coordinator of modern language teaching for the Bas-Rhin *département* in the Académie de Strasbourg, she explained that the Académie de Strasbourg fully supports such actions. However, they are implemented only upon a request made by an individual teacher or a school; they rely on bottom-up action. A wider-ranging top-down action made by the Académie de Strasbourg would indicate a greater commitment to promoting Alsatian across all of the public school bilingual sections.

5.4.3.1 The Linguistic Landscape of Public School Bilingual Sections

In the Strasbourg public school bilingual sections visited, there was no evidence of any written Alsatian being displayed in public spaces, with signs appearing in French and standard German only. In the school visited in Saverne, the ‘Mir rede Elsassisch’ signs that were also present in the Strasbourg ABCM school, were displayed by the two Alsatian-teaching teachers on the doors of their classrooms. One teacher had spare stickers of the signs on his desk, which he explained that he had put there for any pupils who wished to take one. Another teacher said that he had put the sign on his door to show parents that although he teaches German, above all, he is an Alsatian speaker. Even though the ‘Mir rede Elsassisch’ signs are physically small (measuring approximately five centimetres by fifteen centimetres), their appearance on the threshold of the classroom is nonetheless significant symbolically as it signals that Alsatian is a valued language variety. The display of such signs relies on the action of an individual teacher, and thus the teacher again is shown to be a key language policy agent.

5.5 Language Management

In the first part of this chapter, there was an examination of the development of top-down language management, i.e. the language policies imposed by those in a position of authority over the private and public school systems, since bilingual education was introduced in Alsace in the early 1990s. To summarise, officially in the ABCM schools originally the teaching involved French and standard German only, in the last decade Alsatian has been introduced and now it is employed for at least half a day per week in ABCM *écoles maternelles* and it is included in certain extra-curricular activities in the *écoles élémentaires*. In the public school bilingual

sections, whilst in the very early years efforts were made to identify and support speakers of Alsatian, currently only French and standard German are employed as a general rule. Nevertheless, the public school system has indicated that it values Alsatian, by highlighting that it is a part of the linguistic heritage of Alsace, and that it can aid the learning of German (cf. section 4.8.2).

5.5.1 Interviews and Questionnaires with Teachers

In the questionnaires, teachers were asked if they felt that they could impose their own language policies in their classrooms, of which thirteen respondents (representing 61.9%) replied ‘yes’. This suggests that a majority of teachers feel empowered as language managers, and therefore could tailor the employment of languages to suit their own language beliefs and the needs of the class. Five respondents (23.8%), from both the ABCM schools and the public school bilingual sections, stated that they felt that they could not do this. Three of whom explicitly named the texts set out by the Ministère de l’Éducation nationale as a reason why they could not deviate from what is set out officially:

‘No, as I’m a civil servant I have to follow the guidelines by the Ministère de l’Éducation nationale’ (TR9);
‘We are under contract with the Ministère de l’Éducation nationale. We follow the curriculum imposed’ (TR17);
‘No, because there is too much pressure to enter into the mould set out in the curriculum’ (TR16).

These comments link to the suggestion made by Hélot and Young (2006, 72) that the demands of the French curriculum do not leave space for innovation (cf. section 4.9). Furthermore, it highlights that, although most teachers feel that they can develop their own language policies in the classroom, a section of teachers feel bound to explicit top-down policy. Therefore, the inclusion of Alsatian in the classroom

depends not only on the teacher's linguistic ability to employ the language variety and their language beliefs towards it, but also on the freedom that they feel to create their own language-in-education policy.

5.5.2 Interviews with Representatives from the ABCM School Network and the Académie de Strasbourg

As part of the fieldwork for this project, interviews were carried out with Pascale Lux, the vice-president of the ABCM school network, and Anita Marchal, the coordinator of modern language teaching for the Bas-Rhin *département* in the Académie de Strasbourg. The interviews followed a semi-structured format, with questions on the subject of the respective bilingual education programmes. The aim of the interviews was to verify the current official language management in the two systems, to investigate why certain policies are followed, and to examine the language beliefs of the individuals that play an important role in shaping the development of the bilingual education programmes.

In an interview undertaken with Lux, she explained that until the early 2000s the bilingual education programme in ABCM schools centred only on French and standard German, until the network decided to try to include the RL in both of its forms. Lux stated that in the early days Alsatian could be used for one morning or afternoon per week, but soon the decision was taken to employ Alsatian only in the morning so to better support the language variety:

Why the morning? Because the children are, naturally, more receptive, and also more children are at school in the morning; to be sure that all children have this approach to the dialectal form of the language, it had to be done in the morning.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ 'Pourquoi le matin ? Parce que les enfants sont, bien entendu, plus réceptifs, aussi parce que il y a plus d'enfants à l'école aussi le matin, donc pour être sûr que tous les enfants aient cette approche de la langue dialectale, c'était le matin qu'il fallait le faire.'

This approach demonstrates that the ABCM network values Alsatian and wishes to introduce it in a meaningful way in its *écoles maternelles*. The ABCM *écoles élémentaires* continued to provide equal immersion in French and standard German only, but Lux stated that from around 2006 there have been efforts to include the RL in its dialectal form at this level as well. Since the French school week was reduced from 26 to 24 hours per week at primary level in 2008, certain ABCM *écoles élémentaires* have decided to maintain the two extra hours to provide students with extra support (*soutien*), which is carried out in German or in Alsatian, depending on which teacher the pupils are taught by on the day in question. Lux added that there have been efforts to ensure that all classroom assistants are Alsatian-speaking at *école maternelle* level and that other non-teaching staff in the ABCM schools also speak Alsatian, with the aim that it will become ‘the language of communication in the school.’⁸⁷ This is a positive move for Alsatian as it raises general awareness of the language variety, and for those pupils who already have some knowledge of the language variety, it encourages its further learning and maintenance. However, as it has been discussed above, *who* uses a certain language variety carries ‘a hidden message’ (Baker 2006, 222; cf. section 4.5); thus it is important for pupils to see those who have the most influence in the school (i.e. the head teacher and teachers) employ the language in addition to those who are deemed to play a less important role (i.e. the support staff).

As the other associative bilingual schools in France tend to favour a policy of full immersion in the RL, Lux was asked why this policy has not been adopted in the ABCM schools, Lux explained:

⁸⁷ ‘Ce qu’on a voulu aussi c’est que ça devienne, l’alsacien ou le platt [a name for the related language variety spoken in Moselle], devient vraiment la langue de communication dans l’école.’

It's very difficult to convince people here, already with the extra mornings [in Alsatian], there are schools where it poses a lot of problems [...] In Alsace, it is really very, very, very complicated, but I think that the relationship with the Alsatian language is very complicated for a lot of people here.⁸⁸

Hence, Lux suggests that the unique history of the region and the resulting complex nature of the RL in Alsace have prevented it from being employed more comprehensively, as is the case in some of the other RL-speaking areas. In an interview, one of the ABCM teachers explained that the school network would like to move towards more teaching hours in German and Alsatian, but that the ideologies of parents would need to change to allow this.

In spite of the efforts of the ABCM to introduce Alsatian in an effective manner, Lux recognises the limitations that the current language management presents:

We mustn't dream, if the parents themselves have not decided to speak Alsatian with their child, it's not up to us, we say to parents 'It would be good to speak Alsatian, you know it, it's great, make the most of it', but it's a position that doesn't catch on. There's nothing to be done.⁸⁹

Therefore, Alsatian remains to be connected mainly with the home domain; the viewpoint of the ABCM school network is that the language variety must be transmitted intergenerationally, although Lux's final comment reveals an acceptance that often this is not the case. In spite of their efforts to include Alsatian in the school

⁸⁸ 'Nous, on est encore plus au paritaire qu'à l'immersion totale, mais chez nous c'est très difficile, il est très difficile de convaincre les gens, déjà comme ça avec ces matinées en plus, il y a les écoles où ça pose énormément de problèmes [...] En Alsace, c'est vraiment très, très, très compliqué, mais je pense que le rapport à la langue alsacienne est très compliqué de toute façon pour beaucoup de gens d'ici.'

⁸⁹ 'Si l'alsacien n'est pas dans la famille, c'est pas nous qui allons pouvoir l'apporter, ça c'est... je pense que là, il faut pas, il faut pas rêver quoi, il faut pas rêver, si les parents n'ont pas décidé eux de parler l'alsacien avec leur enfant, ce n'est pas nous qui allons... nous, on le dit aux parents « Ça serait bien parler de l'alsacien, vous le savez, c'est génial, profitez-en » mais c'est ça un discours qui ne prend pas. Il n'y a rien à faire.'

domain in a meaningful way, which will improve language attitudes towards it, the ABCM network does not aim to influence language practices significantly through its language-in-education policy.

In an interview with Anita Marchal, in response to the question of whether teachers in bilingual programmes are trained to teach Alsatian-speaking pupils, Marchal outlined plainly the language policy applied in public school bilingual sections:

I must immediately explain to you that our bilingual education system, for public schools, exclusively concerns German. German, the standard language, the language of reference of the [Alsatian] dialects, but which essentially concerns German because, primarily, the majority of families who wish their children to follow the bilingual course are French-speaking families, really French-speakers who have no link whatsoever to the dialect. More French-speaking families request bilingual programmes than dialect-speaking families.⁹⁰

This clearly sets out standard German as the sole target language of the RL component of bilingual education programmes in the public school system. Marchal explains that this policy is pursued because the majority of families who choose bilingual education programmes are not from Alsatian-speaking backgrounds; this reflects the widespread belief that Alsatian is linked to tradition and the home, the

⁹⁰ 'Il faut d'emblée que je vous précise que l'enseignement bilingue paritaire chez nous, pour les écoles publiques, concerne exclusivement l'allemand. L'allemand qui est donc la langue standard, la langue de référence des dialectes, mais qui concerne essentiellement l'allemand parce que, bon, premièrement, tout simplement la plupart des familles qui engagent leurs qui demandent à ce que leurs enfants suivent le cursus bilingue sont des familles francophones, vraiment francophones qui n'ont aucun, aucun, lien quelconque avec le dialecte. Mais c'est plus des familles francophones qui demandent le bilingue que des familles dialectophones. Nous, on aurait aimé implanter des sites bilingues dans des secteurs où on parle encore le dialecte, mais les, finalement, les parents disent « non, le dialecte ils maîtrisent, donc ils se débrouilleront en allemand, c'est le français qu'il faut apprendre ». Donc dans l'enseignement public c'est... c'est la problématique c'est plutôt l'enseignement de l'allemand. Et quand les professeurs donc sont formés à Guebwiller, ils sont formés pour enseigner en allemand. Alors, ils ont, certes, une petite part aussi qui est consacrée à la langue régionale, qui leur permet de se rendre compte de la proximité linguistique entre le dialecte et entre allemand standard, qui fait apparaître, c'est une formation qui fait apparaître un petit peu ce spécificité, mais quand même la formation essentielle est ciblée sur l'enseignement des disciplines en allemand, l'enseignement des mathématiques en allemand, de l'histoire-géographie en allemand, des sciences en allemand, la musique en allemand etcetera.'

school is not thought of as a domain where Alsatian should be taught to non-speakers. Marchal explains that when bilingual education was first introduced, language-in-education policy makers did make an effort to include Alsatian in some locations:

At the time we did propose bilingual French-Alsatian sites, and, if you like, the social volition, the social demand was not for Alsatian, it was for German. To learn a language that will be useful, which will be useful to work on the other side of the border, in Germany, even if with Alsatian one can also work on the other side of the border, but nevertheless Alsatian does not have this status of an international language, an important European language, that German has.⁹¹

This implies that, ultimately, parents drive the language-in-education policies implemented; if parents do not want their children to learn a certain language variety in an optional programme, they will simply not choose to enrol their children. The motivation to learn standard German as an important European and international language is again highlighted here; the unique dual status of the Alsatian RL therefore permits the language variety deemed most advantageous to be promoted, whilst the locally used variety is largely excluded.

When asked if Alsatian-speaking teachers are allowed to use the language variety in class, Marchal stated that they are able to do this:

Of course, if there are dialect-speaking teachers, we encourage them to use it, to say [to pupils] ‘here, this is how you say it in Alsatian’, or if there is a child who speaks, who understands the dialect, who speaks in dialect, of course the teacher [uses it], it happens, they value it. It’s no longer as it was twenty years ago, when the dialect was forbidden from school, on the contrary. We have a few classes like that where the teacher is dialect-speaking and can do it, but for the most part it is not the case, unfortunately. They are either pure

⁹¹ ‘Nous avions à l’époque proposé des sites bilingues français-alsacien, et, si vous voulez, la volonté sociale, enfin la demande sociale n’était pas pour l’alsacien, c’était pour l’allemand. Donc dire autant apprendre une langue qui servira, qui servira à travailler de l’autre côté de la frontière, en Allemagne, même si avec l’alsacien aussi on peut travailler de l’autre côté de la frontière, mais l’alsacien n’a quand même pas ce statut de langue internationale, de grande langue européenne, qui a l’allemand.’

German-speakers, or French speakers who have studied German, who are trained in German.⁹²

This indicates that the Académie de Strasbourg is in favour of Alsatian use at school and in no way should it be viewed as being a forbidden language, although there are no language-in-education policies in place to impose it. Alsatian-speaking teachers can employ Alsatian if they wish to; however, Marchal highlights a lack of Alsatian-speaking teachers as an obstacle to the employment of Alsatian extending to more than a small number of classes. However, the data from the trainee teacher questionnaire survey suggests that there remains a significant proportion of Alsatian-speakers who hope to enter the profession (28.8% declared Alsatian as one of their mother tongues). Furthermore, the employment of Alsatian is envisaged as occurring with pupils that already have a good level of knowledge of the language variety; there is no ambition to teach it to non-Alsatian-speaking pupils. In contrast with the ABCM policy, Marchal stipulated that where Alsatian would be employed, it would only be with the teacher of German, who is concerned with the RL half of the schooling. She added that in some *écoles maternelles* the classroom assistants who are Alsatian-speaking can, and do, speak Alsatian with pupils in either class.

Both Lux and Marchal displayed positive language beliefs towards Alsatian in their interviews. In particular in the ABCM schools, there has been a very definite progression in its promotion of the language variety within the school domain, largely at *école maternelle* level, but also in its *écoles élémentaires*, as well as efforts

⁹² ‘Bien sûr, s’il y a des professeurs qui sont dialectophones, nous, on les encourageons [*sic*] à l’utiliser, à dire « voilà, comment dire en alsacien », ou si, si vraiment il y avait un enfant qui parle, qui comprend le dialecte, qui parle en dialecte, l’enseignant bien sûr dit « oui, voilà », ça se passe, ils valorisent ça. Ça c’est, je veux dire c’est plus comme il y a vingt ans, où le dialecte est exclu de l’école, au contraire. Donc on a comme ça quelques classes où l’enseignant est dialectophone et peut le faire, mais la plupart du temps ce n’est pas le cas, malheureusement. Ce sont soit des germanophones, vraiment purs, ou des francophones qui ont étudié l’allemand, qui sont formés en allemand.’

to encourage its maintenance in its former stronghold: the home. In the public school system, whilst there has been no such imposition of Alsatian, it claims to encourage its use in a small way, depending on the wishes of the individual teacher. However, the prioritisation of the French and standard German languages, and the positive language beliefs towards them in both systems, is unquestionable. In the ABCM schools German is given the advantage over French, as when Alsatian is employed it replaces time that would usually be carried out in French. However, in the public school system, in line with the national policy that stipulates that at least a half of all teaching should be in the national language (cf. section 4.7.2.2), French is given a slight advantage where Alsatian is included by the teacher of German.

5.6 Conclusion

Language-in-education policy in bilingual education programmes in Alsace has overtly privileged French and German since they were established more than two decades ago. However, to varying extents, there has always existed the space to employ Alsatian within the school domain in both the public and private systems. The research carried out in this case study has revealed that, as a general rule, Alsatian is employed more frequently and with more ease in schools located outside of Strasbourg, which reflects the increased relevance of the language variety outside of the city. However, a drop in the intergenerational transmission in the towns outside of Strasbourg would see this situation change in the future.

The results of the research have revealed a division in the language beliefs of parents in the ABCM and the public school systems. Parents who choose an ABCM school are more favourable towards the teaching of the RL in both of its forms,

although ultimately they also prioritise the learning of standard German. The additional comments provided suggest a tolerance of Alsatian in specific settings only, which limits its opportunities to become more widely employed and valued at school. Although the ABCM and the non-Strasbourg schools offer a greater chance of Alsatian being employed, the observations revealed that the language policy followed depends on the individual school and, moreover, the individuals that exact language management at the micro level within the school.

The unusual status of the RL in Alsace has led to the development of unique RL bilingual education programmes in the context of France. Although RL bilingual education is now well established in the region, the impact that this will have on the maintenance of Alsatian is limited as its place at school is overshadowed by the standard languages present. Although standard German is presented as a form of the RL officially, most parents, and also some teachers, view it as an important foreign language or as a neighbour language, which suggests that they do not consider the education that their children follow as constituting a language that they will use in the home domain.

Chapter 6: Conclusion: Language Policy in Bilingual Primary Education in Alsace Today

6.1 Introduction

Language policy in France has consistently privileged the promotion of the French language above the other languages of France for almost five centuries, through the implementation of a succession of laws and the efforts of numerous language agencies. Although this official language policy began with the 1539 signing of the Edict of Villers-Cotterêts, the republican model followed since the Revolution has guaranteed the elevated position of the French language above all others.

Nevertheless, today the RLs find themselves in a relatively strong position in comparison with other minority languages in France; although they do not have an official status, they are recognised as belonging to the heritage of France in Article 75-1 of the French Constitution and they are able to assume a role that is equal to French in public bilingual education programmes. However, they must not be represented more than French in state-run programmes and RL bilingual education remains strictly optional and subject to availability.

The new European political environment, which operates on the regional, national and supranational levels, has created an important space for the support and protection of regional and minority languages in recent decades. May (2001, 7) contends that nation-states are now under pressure, from above and from below, to rethink their official language policies; from above, this includes pressure from supranational institutions and organisations and from below, it involves pressure from minority groups exerting their linguistic human rights. As a result of this, this is a crucial time for regional and minority languages such as Alsatian; there remains a not insignificant number of speakers of the language variety, but it is clear that this

number is dwindling. The debates surrounding France's signing of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages brought the subject of the promotion of the languages of France into the public domain and forced the State to reconsider its official language policy as the twentieth century came to a close. However, the 1992 constitutional amendment which reads: 'the language of the Republic is French', is exploited as a barrier to France ratifying the Charter and it indicates that, in spite of having to accept that it is a multilingual space, the State remains committed to a monolingual ideal. Furthermore, the 1994 Toubon Law guarantees the hegemony of the French language in all public domains. In spite of the societal progress of the RLs since the mid-twentieth century, which began with the introduction of the 1951 Deixonne law, their continued decline suggests that further positive action is required to alter language beliefs and, ultimately, language practices. The introduction of bilingual education in the RLs is a relatively recent development in the French public education system. As it is a domain associated with the use of H languages, the school could act as an important domain to encourage the practice of the RLs and to foster positive language beliefs towards them, which has been witnessed in the case of Gallo in Upper Brittany (Nolan 2011). Positive language beliefs do not automatically guarantee a change in language practices, but a change in behaviours is influenced significantly by the beliefs of individuals and groups.

The remaining concluding remarks and discussion in this chapter will be organised by addressing the three main research questions set out in the thesis introduction (cf. section 1.3), followed by some final comments.

6.2 What Is the Current Language-in-Education Policy in Practice in Primary Bilingual Education Programmes in Alsace?

The research contained within this thesis reveals that the language-in-education policies at primary level differ in the private (associative) and public school systems in Alsace. They exemplify an additive bilingual education model, which often falls into the category of enrichment bilingual education as many pupils enter the programmes as L1 French speakers and acquire the L2 whilst continuing to develop the L1. The acquisition and mastery of French and standard German are the clear common aims of both systems, which is set out in policy statements and this was reiterated in the interviews undertaken with the representatives from the ABCM network and the Académie de Strasbourg as a part of this project. Although in 1985 the Chief Education Officer, Pierre Deyon, declared that the definition of the RL was the Alsatian dialects and standard German, it is the RL in its traditional written form only which is largely promoted, whilst the employment of Alsatian is limited and in some cases does not exist in any form. Therefore, to a large extent, the school system continues to adhere to the standard language ideology that has been promoted in France since the widespread introduction of compulsory education.

In the ABCM schools in recent years there has been a sustained positive action to promote Alsatian alongside standard German, in particular in its *écoles maternelles*, and also in its *écoles élémentaires* to a lesser extent. This means that pupils who attend an ABCM school at both levels will have a regular contact with the language variety between the ages of three and eleven. However, as pupils progress in their primary education this contact with Alsatian decreases as the teaching focuses more on French and German. As there are no ABCM schools at the level of secondary education, any level of contact with Alsatian in the school domain

is not guaranteed after this time. Although Judge (2007, 233) highlights the importance of RL education at primary level, she warns that ‘RLs learned in the primary school sector are often abandoned in later years’. Therefore, if the language-in-education policy followed in the ABCM schools is to have a long-term impact on the language behaviour of its pupils, positive language beliefs towards Alsatian would have to be fostered. Based on the research carried out for this thesis, the encouragement of positive attitudes towards Alsatian is an overt aim of the ABCM school network. However, a greater role for the language variety in its *écoles élémentaires* would help to develop this further; both in terms of the amount of time dedicated to Alsatian, and the range of activities carried out in it. The influence of the ABCM schools on the language beliefs and practices of young people in Alsace is limited owing to the fact that the network operates only eight schools in the region (with two further schools situated close to the regional border in Lorraine). One third of a million pupils will be educated in the Académie de Strasbourg in the public and private school sectors in the 2012–13 school year (Académie de Strasbourg 2012d); it is evident that ABCM school pupils constitute a small minority. The inclusion of the associative schools in the public education system and the subsequent financial assistance to which they would be entitled would allow them to offer more classes in more locations and therefore have a more wide-reaching impact. However, at the current time it appears that a move in this direction remains unlikely.

In the public school system, the presence of Alsatian depends on the action of individual teachers at both levels of primary education. As a consequence, contact with Alsatian in the RL bilingual classroom is uneven throughout the region. Officially, there are no restrictions to introducing Alsatian in the RL half of the teaching in the *écoles maternelles* and *élémentaires*. However, the primary research

discussed in this thesis suggests that some trainee teachers and teachers feel bound to deliver only what is set out in official texts. Therefore, if Alsatian were to be employed more widely in the public bilingual education sections, the Académie de Strasbourg would need to take more direct action to clarify to teachers the possibilities for its use at school. Unlike in the ABCM schools, knowledge of Alsatian is not a requirement for teachers in bilingual programmes in the public school system. However, the fact that a significant number of teachers do not speak Alsatian and may not originate from Alsace does not mean that the language variety cannot be introduced in their classes. Actions such as inviting an Alsatian speaker to perform an activity with the pupils, as happened in the Saverne public school section in the case study, would be a way to bring the language variety into contact with a larger number of pupils. Currently, such actions are supported by the Académie de Strasbourg, but they depend on bottom-up action. If the Académie were to encourage or initiate these actions, this would suggest a greater commitment to supporting the learning of the RL in both of its forms. This clear signalling of their support of Alsatian would demonstrate that this powerful institution values the language variety, which would help to improve the language attitudes of the many actors connected to the bilingual education programme.

According to the research presented here, in both the public and private education systems the employment of Alsatian is more significant outside the urban settings compared to schools of the same system located in Strasbourg. It has been stated above that the larger towns and cities of Alsace have been recognised as witnessing a greater language shift away from Alsatian (INSEE 2002, 4). The promotion of a language variety that is linked with tradition creates a specific set of challenges in the modern city, where it is less present in daily life. Therefore, efforts

to introduce Alsatian in Strasbourg schools require a careful approach in order to have a positive effect.

6.3 What Are the Language Beliefs of the Key Actors in the Bilingual Education Programmes?

In this thesis, the key actors who influence the development of the bilingual education programmes have been identified as the parents, teachers (including trainee teachers) and language-in-education policy-makers. The primary research in this thesis suggests that there is often a division in the language beliefs of the actors in the public and the private systems, and also depending on the location of the school, namely within or outside of the city.

All of the key actors in the private and public school systems, in all locations, demonstrate positive language beliefs towards the standard languages, French and German, which they view as the language varieties that should be prioritised in the RL bilingual education programmes. Overall, most parents claim that they are favourable to the idea of Alsatian being present at school in some way, either in a defined role (indicated by 54.2% of questionnaire respondents) or on a more ad hoc basis (64.3%). However, the level of support for this varies from school to school and in some cases it appears that a compulsory inclusion of Alsatian alongside standard German in the public school system would meet with resistance from some parents, with 62.5% of respondents reporting that they would not like Alsatian to have a role at school in one of the Strasbourg public bilingual school sections. Furthermore, in the ABCM schools a move towards full immersion in German and Alsatian has not been supported by parents. From the classroom observations and the comments provided in the parent questionnaires, Alsatian is frequently envisaged as

being suitable for certain (mainly non-academic) activities only. The widespread belief that Alsatian is a language of the home and private settings is consistent with its traditional role, but this does not reflect the modern reality of life in Alsace. If intergenerational transmission of Alsatian continues to decline at the current rate, the valorisation of the language variety in other domains is crucial.

There exists a persistent argument that the use of Alsatian at school must not hinder the promotion of the standard languages. Garcìa (2009, 291) contends that languages do not have to be distributed evenly in a bilingual education programme to have a positive impact, as long as all languages are respected and valued appropriately. Accordingly, the introduction of Alsatian does not have to entail a significant reduction in the number of hours delivered in German, but it would need to be implemented carefully and regularly. If a place for Alsatian in bilingual education is to be developed in a meaningful way, the actors who influence its development at the macro and micro levels need to view it as a means to enrich the learning of the standard languages, rather than as a threat to their mastery as it has been identified in this thesis. Therefore, the employment of Alsatian, alongside standard German, needs to be considered as adding something to the pupils' bilingual learning.

As the school domain is historically associated with the use of standard languages and the development of literacy, the key actors must challenge this traditional approach to education in France. A step away from the policy of promoting standard and socially prestigious languages only would signal that bilingualism and multilingualism in general are appreciated and that the education system respects the linguistic human rights of its pupils. It would illustrate that language is a dynamic phenomenon which exists in many forms, all of which can be

valued. This would be particularly positive as the data from the parent surveys suggest that children in the bilingual programmes today come from homes where a number of languages other than French, German and Alsatian are present.

6.4 To What Extent Are the Bilingual Education Programmes Currently Acting to Reverse the Language Shift that Has Taken Place in Alsace?

In section 4.8.3 it was explained that the main aim of the RL bilingual education programmes in place in Alsace is not to reverse the language shift away from Alsatian; this was reiterated in the statements made in interviews by Lux and Marchal in section 5.5.2. Even if efforts to reverse a language shift in education should be regarded as ‘initiatory’ and ‘contributory’ (Fishman 1991, 372), the school domain nonetheless plays an important role in shaping the beliefs and behaviours of its pupils and the way that the RL is promoted in bilingual education in Alsace must be considered. In the absence of a guaranteed presence at stage 6 of Fishman’s GIDS (the home-family-neighbourhood setting), in order for Alsatian not to be consigned to stages 7 and 8 (which involves the practice of Xish amongst the older generation only) its presence at other stages is essential.

At stages 4a and 4b of the GIDS (which respectively correspond to the public school bilingual sections and the ABCM schools) primarily standard German is promoted as the RL, which has traditionally been employed as the language of writing and reference in the region, but it has not been a language of everyday communication. Furthermore, data suggests that the general public views Alsatian only as the RL of Alsace (cf. section 3.9.2), although linguists and policy-makers define the RL as the traditionally spoken language varieties and standard German. Moreover, the results of the parent survey discussed in chapter five highlight that

many parents view the education system as promoting what they view to be the neighbour or a foreign language. As bilingual education in general is recognised as being a complex phenomenon (Baker 2011, 207), an analysis of this kind of education in Alsace is particularly complicated due to the nature of the RL. The research here highlights a clear mismatch between the position of policy-makers and the general public on the definition of the RL. Owing to the many advantages associated with the learning of standard German, the language-in-education policy adopted in Alsace has been widely accepted by parents, which is demonstrated by the popularity of the bilingual education programmes.

In the ABCM primary schools the policy to promote Alsatian as well as German creates an increased awareness of Alsatian amongst its pupils. However, it offers only an initiatory learning of the language variety, which will not lead to a significant change in language practices if it is not supported in other domains. The employment of Alsatian in the school domain can act as a means to encourage Alsatian-speaking family members to employ it with children in a home setting, but there is no evidence that this is taking place. The aim of encouraging parents to maintain Alsatian has been set out by the ABCM network, although the vice-president of the association recognises that this crucial next step, namely a change in language practices, is not being taken (cf. section 5.5.2). This phenomenon was also observed in the results of the parent questionnaires, which suggest that the number of parents who practise Alsatian in the home on a regular basis is significantly lower than the number of parents who declare Alsatian as a mother tongue (cf. section 5.4.1 and appendix 1). Since their foundation the ABCM schools gradually have moved in the direction of providing more support for Alsatian and they are acting to encourage positive language beliefs towards the language variety amongst both pupils and

parents. Therefore, it is overtly supporting an ideal in which the language shift would be reversed, but its primary commitment remains the acquisition of standard German, and not Alsatian.

As it has been stated above, in the public school system the use of Alsatian relies on the actions of committed teachers and hence its employment varies from classroom to classroom. This in itself is problematic since it leads to an irregular promotion of the language variety across the region and it means that there is a lack of continuity if teachers leave or pupils change classes. Furthermore, Alsatian will only be used if motivated teachers can find the time to introduce activities whilst also fulfilling the work set out in the curriculum. In the Strasbourg public school bilingual sections which were studied as a part of the fieldwork it was observed that there was no reference to Alsatian in the *écoles maternelle* or *élémentaire* in any way. This means that standard German is taught in a similar way to how it would be taught in any other region of France as a foreign language. In the Saverne public school bilingual section there are teachers who wish to include Alsatian at school in a small way. The activities carried out which involve Alsatian, namely pupils learning songs and teachers speaking it to pupils in communal areas of the school, act to make pupils aware of the language variety. It is noteworthy that these lead pupils to use Alsatian under limited circumstances. However, this will not lead to it being practised beyond these circumstances if it is not supported elsewhere. The use of Alsatian in a situation such as a school concert which will be attended by family members may act as a catalyst for its further employment amongst Alsatian speakers and generally raises its profile, but this does not guarantee that its use will be maintained or restored at home. Moreover, as in the case in the ABCM schools, the

Académie de Strasbourg states that it encourages parents to maintain Alsatian (cf. section 4.8.2), but again this is not translating into practice.

Returning again to the notion put forth by Shohamy (2006, 167), that ‘language, like life, cannot be controlled’, efforts to introduce Alsatian in the school domain may have a limited impact on reversing the shift away from the language variety. Attempts to foster positive language beliefs towards Alsatian, which are being made consistently in the ABCM schools and which are made in an unknown number of public bilingual sections, will not necessarily result in a new generation of Alsatian speakers. The next decades will be pivotal in deciding if Alsatian will remain a vital language of everyday communication in Alsace. The school domain has the potential to encourage positive language attitudes towards Alsatian and to alter language practices, whilst continuing to promote the socially prestigious language varieties. However, in spite of the progress that has been made in some cases, for this to be achieved a greater commitment to supporting Alsatian is required by both the ABCM and public school systems than is being offered at the present time.

6.5 Final Comments

The case study presented in this thesis provides an indication of the language policy of bilingual education classrooms in Alsace in the 2009–10 school year. The thesis has produced a considerable amount of original research, which complements previous work on bilingual education in Alsace (outlined in section 1.2) and moves the literature forward by showing what is happening on the ground at the present time, namely how policy is being put into practice and what the aims are of the key actors involved. It has been shown that schools are dynamic environments in which

the language policy of each class varies depending on the actors involved. Therefore, it has been shown that it is unhelpful to generalise extensively in descriptions of actual language-in-education policy based only on top-down policy statements. Wider-scale studies of what is happening on the ground would provide a more informed view of how France's RLs are being managed in the classroom and help researchers to evaluate the impact of language-in-education policies on their promotion. It is necessary to carry out such studies on a regular basis as language-in-education policies are in a constant state of negotiation as its actors at multiple levels are constantly changing. During the preparation of this thesis, the arrival of a new Chief Education Officer in the Académie de Strasbourg in 2010 has resulted in the implementation of two trial classes in the public school system following a new bilingual education model in which the RL is taught (and taught through) for one third of the school week instead of a half. Whether this will be extended in the future and the effect that this would have on the existing programmes remains to be seen in the coming years. In light of the continued decline of Alsatian it is no longer appropriate to assume that it is the language of the home. Therefore, it is essential to continue investigating the ways in which it is being presented in domains that involve young people, on whom its survival relies. In twenty-first century Europe frameworks are in place to protect and support the rights of speakers of regional and minority languages. Bilingual education programmes offer a valuable opportunity to aid the revitalisation of the RLs in France, although the decline in intergenerational transmission and a lack of support in other public domains means that they remain in a vulnerable position. Alsatian finds itself in a particularly threatened position as the education system mainly supports German, which is acknowledged as the RL in its

traditional written form and enjoys widespread positive language beliefs as a language that offers many advantages in the modern world.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Parent Questionnaire and Results

Questionnaire pour les parents des élèves en école bilingue

Veillez indiquer votre sexe : M/F

1. Vous êtes originaire de quelle région ?

2. Quelle(s) est (sont) votre (vos) langue(s) maternelle(s) ?

3. Avez-vous des autres enfants qui suivent/ont suivi un enseignement bilingue ?

4. Pour quelle raison avez-vous choisi un enseignement bilingue pour votre (vos) enfant(s) ? (Veillez souligner) :

L'apprentissage de l'allemand standard, langue étrangère importante/

L'apprentissage de l'allemand standard, langue du voisin/

L'apprentissage de l'allemand standard et dialectal, langue régionale

5. La politique linguistique de l'école, est-elle clairement présentée aux parents ?

6. Selon vous, le dialecte alsacien, devrait-il avoir un rôle à l'école ?

7. Seriez-vous content si votre (vos) enfant(s) avait l'occasion d'entendre/de parler le dialecte alsacien en classe ?

8. Avec votre (vos) enfant(s), allez-vous dans les pays germanophones ? (Veillez souligner) :

très souvent/souvent/de temps en temps/rarement/jamais

9. Hors de l'école, votre (vos) enfant(s) a-t-il l'occasion d'entendre/parler le dialecte alsacien (veuillez souligner) :

à la maison très souvent/souvent/de temps en temps/rarement/jamais

avec les grands-parents très souvent/souvent/de temps en temps/rarement/jamais

avec les autres membres de la famille très souvent/souvent/de temps en temps/rarement/jamais

avec les voisins très souvent/souvent/de temps en temps/rarement/jamais

en ville très souvent/souvent/de temps en temps/rarement/jamais

10. Selon vous, le dialecte alsacien est-il toujours important pour la culture de la région ?

11. A votre avis, peut-on se sentir alsacien sans parler l'alsacien ?

12. Dans l'avenir, choisiriez-vous un collège bilingue pour vos enfants ?

Questionnaire for the parents of children attending a bilingual school

Please indicate your sex: M/F

1. What region do you originate from?

2. What is (are) your mother tongue(s)?

3. Do you have other children that are following/have followed a bilingual education programme?

4. Why have you chosen a bilingual education programme for your child (children)? (Please underline)

To learn standard German, an important foreign language/

To learn standard German, a neighbour language/

To learn standard and dialectal German, a regional language

5. Is the school's linguistic policy clearly explained to parents?

6. In your opinion, should the Alsatian dialect have a place at school?

7. Would you be pleased if your child (children) had the opportunity to hear/speak the Alsatian dialect in class?

8. Do you go to German-speaking countries with you children? (Please underline)

Very often/often/from time to time/rarely/never

9. Outside of school, do your children have the opportunity to hear/speak the Alsatian dialect (please underline)

At home very often/often/from time to time/rarely/never

With their grandparents very often/often/from time to time/rarely/never

With other members of the family very often/often/from time to time/rarely/never

With neighbours very often/often/from time to time/rarely/never

In town very often/often/from time to time/rarely/never

10. In your opinion, is the Alsatian dialect still important for the regional culture?

11. Do you think that you can feel Alsatian without speaking Alsatian?

12. In the future, will you choose a bilingual secondary school for your children?

Parent Questionnaire Results

School	Number of parent responses
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>maternelle</i>)	21
Saverne ABCM (<i>maternelle</i>)	16
Haguenau ABCM (<i>élémentaire</i>)	65
Strasbourg (<i>maternelle</i>)	13
Strasbourg (<i>élémentaire</i>)	64
Saverne (<i>élémentaire</i>)	87
Total	266

Question 1: What region do you come from?

	Parent from Alsace	Parent from other region
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	12 (57.1%)	9 (42.9%)
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	9 (56.25%)	7 (44.75%)
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	45 (69.2%)	20 (30.8%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	3 (23.1%)	10 (76.9%)
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	29 (45.3%)	35 (54.7%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	52 (59.8%)	35 (40.2%)
Total	151 (56.8%)	115 (43.2%)

Question 2: What is (are) your mother tongue(s)?

	Parent m. t. Alsatian	Parent m. t. other
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	4 (19%)	17 (81%)
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	7 (44.75%)	9 (56.25%)
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	24 (36.9%)	41 (63.1%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	0	13 (100%)
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	7 (10.9%)	57 (89.1%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	18 (20.7%)	69 (79.3%)
Total	60 (22.6%)	206 (77.4%)

Question 3: Do you have other children who follow/have followed a bilingual education programme?

	Yes	No
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	11 (52.4%)	10 (47.6%)
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	9 (56.25%)	7 (43.75%)
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	36 (55.4%)	29 (44.6%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	5 (38.5%)	8 (61.5%)
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	34 (53.1%)	30 (46.9%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	57 (65.5%)	30 (34.5%)
Total	152 (57.1%)	114 (42.9%)

Question 4: Why have you chosen a bilingual education programme for your child/children?

	Foreign language	Neighbour language	Regional language	More than one reason	German=parent L1	Other reason
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	5 (23.8%)	5 (23.8%)	3 (14.3%)	7 (33.3%)	0	1 (4.8%)
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	5 (31.25%)	0	7 (43.75%)	3 (18.75%)	1 (6.25%)	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	25 (38.5%)	6 (9.2%)	25 (38.5%)	9 (13.8%)	0	0
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	9 (69.2%)	3 (23.1%)	1 (7.7%)	0	0	0
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	31 (48.4%)	23 (36%)	0	10 (18.6%)	0	0
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	34 (39.1%)	33 (38%)	7 (8%)	13 (14.9%)	0	0
Total	109 (41%)	70 (26.3%)	43 (16.2%)	42 (15.8%)	1 (0.35%)	1 (0.35%)

Question 5: Is the language policy of the school clearly presented to parents?

	Yes	No	No answer
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	19 (90.4%)	1 (4.8%)	1 (4.8%)
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	14 (87.5%)	2 (12.5%)	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	57 (87.7%)	6 (9.2%)	2 (3.1%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	12 (92.3%)	1 (7.7%)	0
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	45 (70.3%)	16 (25%)	3 (4.7%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	65 (74.7%)	15 (17.2%)	7 (8.1%)
Total	212 (79.7%)	41 (15.4%)	13 (4.9%)

Question 6: In your opinion, should the Alsatian dialect have a role at school?

	Yes	No	Don't know	Conditional	No answer
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	15 (71.4%)	3 (14.3%)	0	2 (9.5%)	1 (4.8%)
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	12 (75%)	3 (18.75%)	1 (6.25%)	0	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	51 (78.5%)	5 (7.7%)	3 (4.6%)	0	6 (9.2%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	7 (53.8%)	5 (38.5%)	1 (7.7%)	0	0
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	13 (20.3%)	40 (62.5%)	4 (6.2%)	6 (9.4%)	1 (1.6%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	46 (52.9%)	27 (31%)	2 (2.3%)	12 (13.8%)	0
Total	144 (54.2%)	83 (31.2%)	11 (4.1%)	20 (7.5%)	8 (3%)

Question 7: Would you be happy if your child (your children) had the opportunity to hear/speak Alsatian in class?

	Yes	No	Not important	Conditional	Don't know	No answer
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	18 (85.7%)	1 (4.8%)	0	1 (4.8%)	0	1 (4.7%)
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	12 (75%)	2 (12.5%)	1 (6.25%)	1 (6.25%)	0	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	54 (83.1%)	6 (9.2%)	2 (3.1%)	0	0	3 (4.6%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	6 (46.1%)	3 (23.1%)	0	2 (15.4%)	1 (7.7%)	1 (7.7%)
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	28 (43.75%)	28 (43.75%)	0	1 (1.6%)	5 (7.8%)	2 (3.1%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	53 (60.9%)	20 (23%)	4 (4.6%)	9 (10.3%)	0	1 (1.2%)
Total	171 (64.3%)	60 (22.6%)	7 (2.6%)	14 (5.2%)	6 (2.3%)	8 (3%)

Question 8: With your child (your children), do you go to German-speaking countries?

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No answer
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	5 (23.8%)	8 (38.1%)	6 (28.6%)	2 (9.5%)	0	0
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	1 (6.25%)	3 (18.75%)	11 (68.75%)	1 (6.25%)	0	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	12 (18.5%)	14 (21.5%)	26 (40%)	7 (10.8%)	3 (4.6%)	3 (4.6%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	1 (7.7%)	2 (23%)	5 (38.5%)	4 (30.8%)	0	0
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	10 (15.6%)	18 (28.1%)	32 (50%)	4 (6.3%)	0	0
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	4 (4.6%)	19 (21.8%)	37 (42.5%)	22 (25.3%)	3 (3.5%)	2 (2.3%)
Total	33 (12.4%)	65 (24.4%)	117 (44%)	40 (15%)	5 (1.9%)	6 (2.3%)

Question 9: Outside of school, does your child (do your children) have the opportunity to hear/speak the Alsatian dialect?

At home

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No answer
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	0	1 (4.8%)	5 (23.8%)	1 (4.8%)	13 (61.9%)	1 (4.7%)
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	0	3 (18.75%)	2 (12.5%)	4 (25%)	7 (43.75%)	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	8 (12.3%)	11 (16.9%)	14 (21.5%)	9 (13.8%)	17 (26.2%)	6 (9.3%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	0	0	0	4 (30.8%)	9 (69.2%)	0
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	2 (3.1%)	2 (3.1%)	4 (6.25%)	11 (17.2%)	36 (56.25%)	9 (14.1%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	3 (3.5%)	6 (6.9%)	12 (13.8%)	18 (20.7%)	39 (44.8%)	9 (10.3%)
Total	13 (4.9%)	23 (8.6%)	37 (13.9%)	47 (17.7%)	121 (45.5%)	25 (9.4%)

With grandparents

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No answer
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	1 (4.8%)	4 (19.05%)	4 (19.05%)	5 (23.8%)	7 (33.3%)	0
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	1 (6.25%)	4 (25%)	5 (31.25%)	2 (12.5%)	4 (25%)	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	15 (23.1%)	12 (18.4%)	13 (20%)	4 (6.2%)	14 (21.5%)	7 (10.8%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	0	1 (7.7%)	2 (15.4%)	0	10 (76.9%)	0
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	4 (6.2%)	6 (9.4%)	9 (14.1%)	7 (10.9%)	30 (46.9%)	8 (12.5%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	9 (10.3%)	15 (17.2%)	14 (16.1%)	12 (13.8%)	30 (34.5%)	7 (8.1%)
Total	30 (11.3%)	42 (15.8%)	47 (17.6%)	30 (11.3%)	95 (35.7%)	22 (8.3%)

With other family members

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No answer
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	0	0	6 (28.6%)	3 (14.3%)	12 (57.1%)	0
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	0	6 (37.5%)	3 (18.75%)	0	7 (43.75%)	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	8 (12.3%)	7 (10.8%)	14 (21.5%)	10 (15.4%)	19 (29.2%)	7 (10.8%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	0	0	2 (15.4%)	1 (7.7%)	10 (76.9%)	0
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	1 (1.6%)	4 (6.2%)	6 (9.4%)	11 (17.2%)	34 (53.1%)	8 (12.5%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	1 (1.15%)	4 (4.6%)	11 (12.65%)	18 (20.7%)	45 (51.7%)	8 (9.2%)
Total	10 (3.8%)	21 (7.9%)	42 (15.8%)	43 (16.2%)	127 (47.7%)	23 (8.6%)

With neighbours

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No answer
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	0	2 (9.5%)	3 (14.3%)	7 (33.3%)	8 (38.1%)	1 (4.8%)
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	0	1 (6.25%)	6 (37.5%)	5 (31.25%)	4 (25%)	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	5 (7.7%)	3 (4.6%)	15 (23.1%)	13 (20%)	25 (38.4%)	4 (6.2%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	0	0	0	1 (7.7%)	12 (92.3%)	0
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	0	0	3 (4.7%)	9 (14.05%)	43 (67.2%)	9 (14.05%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	0	2 (2.3%)	8 (9.2%)	24 (27.6%)	45 (51.7%)	8 (9.2%)
Total	5 (1.9%)	8 (3%)	35 (13.2%)	59 (22.2%)	137 (51.5%)	22 (8.2%)

In town

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No answer
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	0	0	4 (19%)	8 (38.1%)	8 (38.1%)	1 (4.8%)
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	0	0	7 (43.75%)	7 (43.75%)	2 (12.5%)	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	3 (4.6%)	4 (6.2%)	10 (15.4%)	23 (35.3%)	18 (27.7%)	7 (10.8%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	0	0	1 (7.7%)	6 (46.2%)	5 (38.4%)	1 (7.7%)
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	2 (3.1%)	1 (1.6%)	9 (14.1%)	25 (39%)	22 (34.4%)	5 (7.8%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	2 (2.3 %)	5 (5.75%)	24 (27.6%)	30 (34.5%)	21 (24.1%)	5 (5.75%)
Total	7 (2.6%)	10 (3.8%)	55 (20.7%)	99 (37.2%)	76 (28.6%)	19 (7.1%)

Total cross all settings

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No answer
Stras ABCM (<i>m</i>)	1 (0.9%)	7 (6.7%)	22 (20.9%)	24 (22.9%)	48 (45.7%)	3 (2.9%)
Sav ABCM (<i>m</i>)	1 (1.25%)	14 (17.5%)	23 (28.75%)	18 (22.5%)	24 (30%)	0
Hag ABCM (<i>é</i>)	39 (12%)	37 (11.4%)	66 (20.3%)	59 (18.2%)	93 (28.6%)	31 (9.5%)
Stras (<i>m</i>)	0	1 (1.5%)	5 (7.7%)	12 (18.5%)	46 (70.8%)	1 (1.5%)
Stras (<i>é</i>)	9 (2.8%)	13 (4.1%)	31 (9.7%)	63 (19.7%)	165 (51.5%)	39 (12.2%)
Sav (<i>é</i>)	15 (3.4%)	32 (7.4%)	69 (15.9%)	102 (23.4%)	180 (41.4%)	37 (8.5%)
Total	65 (4.9%)	104 (7.8%)	216 (16.2%)	278 (20.9%)	556 (41.8%)	111 (8.4%)

Question 10: In your opinion, is Alsatian still important for the regional culture?

	Yes	No	Depends	Don't know	No answer
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	21 (100%)	0	0	0	0
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	15 (93.75%)	0	0	1 (6.25%)	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	60 (92.3%)	0	1 (1.5%)	0	4 (6.2%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	11 (84.6%)	1 (7.7%)	0	1 (7.7%)	0
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	51 (79.7%)	8 (12.5%)	0	2 (3.1%)	3 (4.7%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	81 (93.1%)	2 (2.3%)	0	2 (2.3%)	2 (2.3%)
Total	239 (89.8%)	11 (4.1%)	1 (0.4%)	6 (2.3%)	9 (3.4%)

Question 11: In your opinion, can one feel Alsatian without speaking Alsatian?

	Yes	No	Yes & no	Don't know	No answer
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	16 (76.2%)	3 (14.3%)	1 (4.75%)	1 (4.75%)	0
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	12 (75%)	2 (12.5%)	0	2 (12.5%)	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	37 (56.9%)	22 (33.9%)	1 (1.5%)	1 (1.5%)	4 (6.2%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	9 (69.2%)	3 (23.1%)	0	1 (7.7%)	0
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	46 (71.9%)	10 (15.6%)	0	5 (7.8%)	3 (4.7%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	60 (69%)	19 (21.8%)	3 (3.5%)	1 (1.1%)	4 (4.6%)
Total	180 (67.7%)	59 (22.2%)	5 (1.9%)	11 (4.1%)	11 (4.1%)

Question 12: In the future, would you choose a bilingual secondary school for your children?

	Yes	No	Don't know	No answer
Strasbourg ABCM (<i>m</i>)	20 (95.2%)	0	1 (4.8%)	0
Saverne ABCM (<i>m</i>)	15 (93.75%)	1 (6.25%)	0	0
Haguenau ABCM (<i>é</i>)	58 (89.2%)	0	4 (6.2%)	3 (4.6%)
Strasbourg (<i>m</i>)	12 (92.3%)	1 (7.7%)	0	0
Strasbourg (<i>é</i>)	55 (85.9%)	1 (1.6%)	6 (9.4%)	2 (3.1%)
Saverne (<i>é</i>)	76 (87.4%)	6 (6.9%)	2 (2.3%)	3 (3.4%)
Total	236 (88.7%)	9 (3.4%)	13 (4.9%)	8 (3%)

Appendix 2: Trainee Teacher Questionnaire and Results

Questionnaire IUFM Guebwiller

- 1. Aimeriez-vous trouver un poste en Alsace après vos études ?**
- 2. Etes-vous d'origine alsacienne ?**
- 3. Quelle est (sont) votre (vos) langue(s) maternelle(s) ?**
- 4. Avez-vous des connaissances de l'alsacien ? (Veuillez souligner)**

A l'oral**A l'écrit**
- 5. Pourquoi avez-vous choisi de devenir prof bilingue ?**
- 6. Dans votre formation, avez-vous été préparé(e) à travailler avec des élèves dialectophones/pensez-vous que vous serez préparé(e) ?**
- 7. Dans votre stage, avez-vous déjà rencontré des élèves dialectophones ? Est-ce que vous attendez à rencontrer des élèves dialectophones ?**
- 8. Si vous avez déjà rencontré des élèves dialectophones, comment avez-vous réagi ?**
- 9. L'élève dialectophone, a-t-il le droit de parler en alsacien en classe ?**
- 10. Pour vous, l'enseignement de l'allemand standard, signifie-t-il une promotion de la langue régionale en Alsace ?**



Questionnaire IUFM Guebwiller

- 1. Would you like to find a post in Alsace after your studies?**
- 2. Do you originate from Alsace?**
- 3. What is (are) your mother tongue(s)?**
- 4. Do you have knowledge of Alsatian? (Please underline)**

Spoken	Written
---------------	----------------
- 5. Why have you chosen to become a bilingual teacher?**
- 6. In your training, have you been prepared to work with dialect-speaking pupils/do you think that you will be prepared?**
- 7. In your placement, have you already met dialect-speaking pupils? Do you expect to meet any dialect-speaking pupils?**
- 8. If you have met dialect-speaking pupils, how did you react?**
- 9. Is a dialect-speaking pupil permitted to speak Alsatian in class?**
- 10. In your opinion, does the teaching of standard German represent a promotion of the regional language in Alsace?**

Trainee Teacher Questionnaire Results⁹³

Question 1: Would you like to find a post in Alsace after your studies?

Yes	Don't know
51 (98.1%)	1 (1.9%)

Question 2: Do you originate from Alsace?

Yes	No
40 (76.9%)	12 (23.1%)

Question 3: What is (are) your mother tongue(s)?

Alsatian	Alsatian and another language	French	French and another language	German
1 (1.9%)	14 (26.9%)	30 (57.7%)	5 (9.6%)	2 (3.8%)

Question 4: Do you have knowledge of Alsatian?

Knowledge of spoken Alsatian

Yes	No
41 (78.8%)	11 (21.2%)

Knowledge of written Alsatian

Yes	No
25 (48.1%)	27 (51.9%)

Question 7: In your placement, have you already met dialect-speaking pupils? Do you expect to meet any dialect-speaking pupils?

Yes	No
28 (53.8%)	24 (46.2%)

⁹³ The results for questions five, six and eight are not presented here as they are not suitable for quantitative analysis.

Question 9: Is a dialect-speaking pupil permitted to speak Alsatian in class?

Yes	No	Don't know	No answer/answer not applicable
34 (65.4%)	5 (9.6%)	8 (15.4%)	5 (9.6%)

Question 10: In your opinion, does the teaching of standard German represent a promotion of the regional language in Alsace?

Yes	No	Depends	Don't know	No answer
23 (44.2%)	21 (40.4%)	5 (9.6%)	1 (1.9%)	2 (3.8%)

Appendix 3: Teacher Questionnaire

Questionnaire pour les profs en école bilingue

Veillez indiquer votre sexe : M / F

1. Vous êtes originaire de quelle région ?

2. Quelle(s) est (sont) votre (vos) langue(s) régionale(s) ?

3.a. Vous êtes prof bilingue (veuillez souligner) :

en français / en allemand langue régionale / les deux

3.b. En quelle(s) classe(s) (veuillez souligner) :

petite section / moyenne section / grande section / cours préparatoire /
cours élémentaire niveau 1 / cours élémentaire niveau 2 / cours moyen 1 /
cours moyen 2

3.c. En classe (veuillez souligner) :

bilingue publique / bilingue associative (ABCM)

4. Pourquoi avez-vous choisi de devenir prof bilingue ?

5. a. Il y a combien de dialectophones dans votre (vos) classe(s) :

pas de dialectophones / quelques-uns / un tiers / la moitié / plus que la moitié

5.b. Et combien de germanophones (allemand standard comme langue maternelle) :

pas de dialectophones / quelques-uns / un tiers / la moitié / plus que la moitié

6. Vos élèves ont-ils le droit de parler le dialecte en classe ?

7.a. En classe, les élèves ont-ils l'occasion d'entendre le dialecte alsacien ?

7.b. Ont-ils l'occasion de parler le dialecte alsacien ?

8. Encouragez-vous le multilinguisme en classe (avec les langues autres que le français et l'allemand standard) ?

- 9. Dans votre formation, avez-vous été préparé pour travailler avec les dialectophones ?**
- 10.a. Avez-vous déjà utilisé des matériaux en langue régionale dialectale en classe?**
- 10.b. Utiliseriez-vous tels matériaux en classe dans l'avenir ?**
- 11. Selon vous, enseigner l'allemand en Alsace, c'est enseigner (veuillez souligner):**
une langue étrangère / la langue du voisin / la langue régionale d'Alsace
- 12. A votre avis, actuellement le dialecte alsacien, a-t-il un rôle dans l'apprentissage de la langue régionale ?**
- 13. Pourquoi encourageriez-vous les parents alsaciens à envoyer leurs enfants à une école bilingue ?**
- 14. En Alsace, le modèle bilingue est immersion à parité horaire, à votre avis, 13 heures par semaine, est-il suffisant pour l'apprentissage de la langue régionale ?**
- 15. La politique linguistique de l'école, est-elle clairement présentée aux profs ?**
- 16. En tant que prof, vous sentez-vous libre d'exercer votre propre politique linguistique en classe ?**

Questionnaire for teachers in a bilingual school

Please indicate your sex: M/ F

1. What region do you originate from?

2. What is (are) your mother tongue(s)?

3.a. You are a teacher in (please underline):

French / German as a regional language / both

3.b. In which class (please underline) :

petite section / moyenne section / grande section / cours préparatoire /
cours élémentaire niveau 1 / cours élémentaire niveau 2 / cours moyen 1 /
cours moyen 2

3.c. In which type of school (please underline):

Public bilingual school / Private bilingual school (ABCM)

4. Why did you choose to become a bilingual teacher?

5. a. How many dialect speakers do you have in your class:

None/ a few/ a third of the class/ half/ more than a half

5.b. And how many German speakers (German as a mother tongue):

None/ a few/ a third of the class/ half/ more than a half

6. Do pupils have the right to speak the Alsatian dialect in class?

7.a. In class, do the pupils have the opportunity to hear the Alsatian dialect?

7.b. Do the pupils have the opportunity to speak the Alsatian dialect?

8. Do you encourage multilingualism in class (with languages other than French and standard German)?

9. In your training, have you been trained to work with dialect speakers?

10.a. Have you already used materials in the regional dialect in class?

10.b. Would you use such materials in the future?

11. In your opinion, teaching German in Alsace is teaching (please underline):

A foreign language/ a neighbour language/ the regional language of Alsace

12. Do you think that the Alsatian dialect currently has a role in the teaching of the regional language?

13. Why would you encourage parents to send their children to a bilingual school?

14. In Alsace, the bilingual model followed is partial immersion, in your opinion is 13 hours per week enough to learn the regional language?

15. Is the school's linguistic policy clearly explained to teachers?

16. As a teacher, do you feel free to follow your own linguistic policy in class?

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